

LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

MAY, 1894.

A PROFESSIONAL BEAUTY.

INTRODUCTION.

A FEW days ago mamma inadvertently suggested an idea to my mind that fell at once into congenial soil, for it immediately took root, and its first-fruits are visible in the opening words of a record of my experience as a Professional Beauty.

Notwithstanding my brilliant and phenomenal social success, mamma has of late, I think, felt a little discouraged that such an A No. 1 article as her eldest daughter has not made *un bon marché* at Vanity Fair. For though I am still much sought after and admired, yet my four seasons are undeniably accusatory and disheartening facts, and there is no longer the ghost of an excuse for keeping Élise in the nursery.

Therefore, as we were breakfasting *en tête-à-tête* the other day, I perceived that mamma had something on her mind, for she kept her eyes fixed on me in a steady, irritating sort of stare, that made me wonder if I had got my color a trifle too high or if my face showed symptoms of scarlet fever. Finally I grew nervous, and as I never allow myself to indulge in that feminine weakness, which spoils the digestion and has its revenge on the complexion, I sent Jane out of the room on some pretext, and then said,—

"For heaven's sake, mamma, what is the matter? You glare at me as though I had the Gorgon's head on my shoulders!"

She sighed heavily.

"Evelyn," she began, "I was thinking, dear, that to-morrow is your twenty-fourth birthday, and that Élise is already attracting considerable attention. She is nearly twenty, and only yesterday dear Lady Melfort hinted strongly her disapproval of secluding her longer from the world. If she were only delicate, now, so that I might have a legitimate reason for keeping her out of society another year!—but, dear me! she is so provokingly well!"

"Poor mamma! And you fear that I should cast Élise's lesser attractions in the shade?"

Mamma looked uncomfortable. She has always cultivated courtesy in our private relations, and I know that she had to swallow twice before she said,—

"Ahem! No, my dear, not precisely that. Of course Élise is not your equal in beauty or style, and I can never dare hope for her such a triumph as yours has been," (I shivered a little at the past tense,) "but—ahem!—she is—well, love—younger—less—less—"

I could not help smiling at mamma's distressed countenance, and good-naturedly helped her out.

"Less well known and more of a novelty, you mean? Well, bring the child out: I promise not to ill treat her even if she eclipse me."

As I had expected that my kindly reception of a disagreeable truth would relieve mamma's countenance of its gloom, I was surprised to see its shadows deepen.

"That's just it," she replied. "Of course Élise must come out; but how dreadful to have two daughters on the carpet at once!"

"Well, mamma, what shall I do? Get me to a nunnery, elope with a detrimental, or take an overdose of chloral? Anything, short of marrying that dreadful little Bargrave, I am willing to do to prove my filial devotion and rid you of an incubus."

Then I saw her face light up, and a horrible fear took possession of me lest I had committed myself to a promise whose fulfilment mamma, in her position of embarrassed and disappointed chaperon, might claim. Suddenly it dawned upon me that she had been spreading a trap into which I had innocently fallen. There are persons in the world who call my mother weak and silly: I only wish I had half her cleverness and determination!

"Dearest," she said, with a half-deprecating air, "we are not reduced to such straits, I trust; but really my position is most unpleasant. People say such horrid things, and are so unsparing in their remarks. Only fancy that dreadful Ellen Simpson from *America*" (mamma always speaks of our native land in italics, as if its syllables were distasteful) "saying, the other day, 'So you haven't married Evelyn, yet! It is so unfortunate not to get one daughter off before the other comes on.' Well, I was going to propose that you withdraw a little this year, and rather devote yourself to more sober pursuits. There are some very desirable men, now, among authors, and the old prejudice against clever women has died out entirely. Couldn't you take up some studies and cultivate a literary taste? It would really sound rather well for me to be able to say that you had wearied of society and admiration and had gone in for more solid things. You are quite equal to it, my love, and perhaps in time might form a *salon*. It's a very elegant thing to do, and literary entertainments are so inexpensive, you know! The less you give your guests to eat, the more profound your cult is held to be. I'm sure I suffered from actual starvation at Mrs. Doliber's afternoon; the salads were rancid, the tea weak and thin, and the biscuits cheap and scarce; but I heard on all sides what a superior woman she was, how difficult it was to get a card to her house, etc."

It was a rudeness, I know, but I could not help bursting into a loud laugh as mamma finished. It was not altogether a merry, hearty affair, for I confess I was a little piqued at the thought of relinquishing my still enviable place in society and of sinking into a mere blue-stockings—for which *rôle* I am about as well fitted as is a butterfly to become again a grub. Say what you will, it is a bitter thing for a woman to realize that her position of belle is no longer tenable; and, as I was still more attractive than the majority of women, and had more attention than I could accept, I felt that—to use a vulgar expression—this was a premature taking of the bull by the horns which I did not relish.

Still, I was, I confess, tired to death of the eternal treadmill, and had been recently startled by discovering that the slow, sweet smile which by dint of long practice I have made mine was grooving certain set lines about my nose and mouth that bade fair to become, in time, as ugly as wrinkles. If I might abandon this for a time and give way to a natural movement of the facial muscles, I thought that the mischief might yet be averted; besides which, I had an object in view, for the accomplishing of which mamma's plan, with some amendments, seemed to offer a means.

Mamma accepted my merriment in bewildered silence, evidently at a loss as to what prompted it. I soon enlightened her.

"Pardon me, mamma," I said, "but really the thought of myself as a De Staël or Mme. Necker overcame my manners. I don't think I am quite fitted for such distinction, but I do feel as though a good rest would be of inestimable benefit to me. Yesterday I had a long letter from Mary Carteret, begging me to come down to them in Jersey for a change, to remain as long as I cared to. The prospect seemed inviting then, and is doubly so now, when I find that, in your plans, I am *de trop*. I should like to skip a season in town, and will give Élise a fair field; besides, I may become so rejuvenated in the air which created the Langtry that Miss Élise will have to look to her laurels next year. I think the literary career we had better abandon *in toto*. You had no ulterior motive, I suppose, in proposing it?"

I am always a little suspicious of mamma; I can't help it, she has given me so many back-handers under the guise of maternal interest and good counsel; but before she could utter the disclaimer that I knew was forthcoming, the door opened, and Élise entered with an open letter in her hand. She had met the letter-carrier and had possessed herself of our share of his burden.

There were letters for us all, and we were soon engaged in mastering their contents. Mamma's and mine were the same old story,—bills, cards, and invitations *ad nauseam et infinitum*,—but Élise, who was still in the school-girl era, when letters of length, if not of great literary value, are written, finished page after page of crossed and recrossed script. When she had waded through it all, I asked,—

"Is there any news at all in that mass of expensive stationery, my child, or is it entirely devoted to discourses on the precarious fragility of virgin hearts and the dangerous fascinations of callow youths? Mamma and I are dying of *ennui*, and I'll give you my second-best

24

nail-polisher if you will revive us with a thoroughly interesting bit of news."

Élise, who is a bit covetous of my more elegant toilet-equipments, became for a moment thoughtful while she made a digest of the documentary matter she had just perused; then she brightened up remarkably, and cried, enthusiastically,—she will never attain to my perfected indifference, being of an exuberant nature that surmounts all mamma's attempts at repression,—

"Eureka! I have it! This is a genuine bargain, Evelyn?"

"Yes, if your news is genuine and interesting."

"I will vouch for its being genuine; and it should be interesting, as it concerns two of your old flames."

"Out with it, then," I said, with languid interest, expecting some trifling bit of gossip.

"You shouldn't say *it*, but *them*, for there are two pieces,—one from America and the other from France. Fanny Starkweather is visiting in Paris, you know, and she writes me that her uncle, Lord Denbigh, came to see her a few days ago, took her out driving and to the Comédie, and gave her a good time generally, in which you are not, probably, interested; but she also says—where is it?—oh, here! 'Uncle Denbigh is at last going back to London, after an absence of eighteen months. He is as great a bookworm as ever, and says he shall not go out, except among the *litterati*. I suppose he has made his intention public, because Mrs. Hayden—at whose house I spend my Saturday afternoons—said to me last week, 'So Lord Denbigh is about to return to England! Well, some *bas bleu* will catch him, I suppose, as I understand he is tired of society women. It's rather a joke that such a *parti* should escape the match-makers.' Well, he is a magnificent old dear, and I wouldn't blame any girl for turning blue on his account.' There! What do you say to that? Doesn't it cause a flutter to know that you will have one more chance at such a prize?"

I neglected to reprove her impertinence, so amused was I at mamma's discomfiture, for I now fully understood—being aware that she and Mrs. Hayden had maintained a regular correspondence for some time—the motive of the proposition to which I had so lately listened. But then I remembered what a disappointment to her my refusal of Lord Denbigh had been, and forbore any allusion to her obvious intention of again bringing us together.

"Very good, Élise," I said, "and frightfully exciting. Now for the other!"

Élise looked at me tantalizingly, screwing up her mouth and half shutting her big brown eyes.

"Guess," she replied. "I shan't tell you unless you guess it."

"My *child*!" I said, reprovingly. "Will you ever learn to forget the distinguishing expressions of your native land? Do you not know that it is as distinctive a mark of Yankee breeding to descend to that vulgar form of conjecture as it is to cross one's limbs or become guilty of a witty remark?—Mamma, do you not despair of eradicating the American taint in your youngest?"

Élise pouted and declared that until I attempted to discover it for myself she should withhold the intelligence.

"Very good, dearest," I said, rising from the table.—"Excuse me, mamma; I have some notes to answer.—So glad you do not care for the polisher, Élie, for I think it would have been foolish in me to give it up." And I proceeded to leave the breakfast-room.

I had almost reached the door, when Élise sprang forward and caught me by the lace of my *négligé*.

"Wait, you provoking thing!" she cried, laughingly. "I have half earned your polisher, and won't let you indulge your selfishness at my expense. Well, then! Paul Sturgis is coming abroad again."

Paul Sturgis coming abroad! Something stowed tightly away under my expensive French corsets gave a leap, which its fashionable bonds quickly repressed. What utter contempt, by the way, French stays must feel for the heart they coerce! I never put mine on without feeling that I owe them an apology that the organ they embrace is not the properly-trained Gallic affair for which they were created. However, I had perfect confidence in my rouge,—some of Rimmel's best, to the use of which I have been addicted only within the past year,—and my voice has always been a mean-spirited thing in talking, completely under subjection, responding perfectly to any demands I make upon it, only kicking over the traces a bit in singing: so now I shrugged my shoulders carelessly, and said to Élise,—

"You are no judge, *petite*, of what will interest a woman of the world. Two years hence you will not consider such trifles fair equivalent for a beautiful ivory polisher. Still, it is yours, for you have spoken according to your lights."

The child actually overlooked the gift in indignation at my words.

"Is she not horrid, mamma?" she cried, turning her pretty eyes appealingly to the maternal tribunal. "To be indifferent to darling Paul's coming! I think it is utterly shameful; don't you?"

But mamma pretended to be occupied with her letters, and failed to reply. Perhaps the news just imparted had not been the most welcome in the world to her, though it was utterly impossible, I felt, knowing her so thoroughly, that she could ever feel, as did I, the crushing weight of our obligation to Paul Sturgis.

I pacified Élise and despatched her to possess herself of the long-coveted toilet article; then I approached mamma, who looked embarrassed as I accosted her.

"You knew that Lord Denbigh was coming home, and wanted me to meet him again?" I asked.

"Well, yes," she answered, reluctantly. "It would be such a good thing for you, dear, and the expenses of two girls in society——"

"Excuse me, mamma, for interrupting you, but let me set your desires and anxieties equally at rest. Marry Lord Denbigh I never will; on that point I am firm; but I also acknowledge and sympathize with the awkwardness of your position, and am quite willing to do all in my power to relieve it. I cannot accept the *métier* you have proposed to me, as I have not the necessary qualifications, but I shall be only too glad to spend the coming season out of London. I shall

write Mary Carteret that she may expect me immediately ; and as they are quiet, simple people, you will not even be at the expense of a maid for me. I will stay with them until they show a disposition to regard my room as a fair equivalent for my company, and then there are many others who have been urging me for ages to come to them. Poor mamma ! I'm sorry I've been such a disappointment."

I leaned down and kissed her forehead lightly, having learned long ago that she was more than indifferent to any caresses upon her cheeks or lips. She looked decidedly dubious.

"My dear, won't it look suspicious for you to shirk a whole season ? Won't people think there is some reason ? a disappointment or something ?"

"No, mamma, I think not. People are not wont to associate me with the thought of a broken heart."

"Couldn't you bring Lord Bargrave to the point before you go ? There would be a certain *éclat* in having refused him on the eve of your departure. It would seem to the world as if you fled to escape the persecution of admiration. Couldn't you manage it, my dear ?"

"I don't think I can, mamma. I am really tired of the whole business. Come, give your consent at once, please, and let me make my plans."

She looked as if she were about to consent, when Élise's second piece of news recurred to her mind.

"Why, Evelyn ! there is Paul ! You must stay and see him ?"

I laid my hand heavily on her shoulder and looked her squarely in the face.

"Mamma, I never will meet Paul Sturgis again until our obligation to him is cancelled. His coming is an additional inducement to me to leave London. May I go ?"

For a moment she balanced the pros and cons in her mind ; then—for the consideration of my expenses for an entire London season was of serious moment—she reluctantly yielded her consent to my plan, assuring me, with tears in her eyes (which were not allowed to fall), that nothing save her duty toward Élise and the narrow limit of her income should induce her to part with her beloved child.

A week later I became a warmly-welcomed inmate of the Carteret household, where, my renown having preceded me, I found the family and servants disposed to wait upon and regard me as the social queen which I have been ; and it has taken some days to convince them that I have abdicated my sovereignty and desire nothing but rest, freedom from constraint, and leisure to work out the scheme which was the main reason of my sudden acquiescence in the maternal desire.

I am determined to become a free woman again, and this I can do only by ridding myself of the burden of obligation to Paul Sturgis in which I, as my mother's child, have become participator. It is necessary for me to raise a considerable sum of money before I can effect my liberation ; and the manner of doing this has become a problem that has weighed heavily upon my spirits, until mamma unintentionally suggested its solution. Why should I not write a book ?

I know that I am not capable of any serious literary production,

but nowadays "trifles light as air" have enormous sales, and I believe that the record of certain experiences in my career—masquerading, of course, beneath fictitious names and circumstances—might prove one of those ephemeral successes which bring substantial reward to their projectors.

Thus, with an apology for its existence, ends my preface. If my story is not a success it is not that I lack proper conditions for its portrayal. I am already in love with my surroundings. In this lovely island of Jersey, where the spring is already well under way, I, for the first time in many years, realize what Nature is, and how beautiful life, under some circumstances, may become. I have never before spent this season in the country, and every opening bud and flower is a new revelation.

The Carteret home-life is so different from any previous experience of mine that I must confess I feel at times a little embarrassment in the face of such utter simplicity; and my own conventionalities, which are more natural to me now than naturalness itself, seem absurd and ridiculous. Oh, horror! what if I should return to mamma an *ingénue*! Fancy her disgust!

CHAPTER I.

MY father, Frederick Davis Hilliard, was a New York merchant, who began life as the driver of a variety-cart through the wilds of Vermont. The circumstance of the vehicle having been drawn by a quadruplet of horses probably suggested to mamma the pretty form of expression in which she is wont frequently to indulge before strangers whom she wishes to impress with a sense of the luxury in which her husband's boyhood was passed.

"My husband was a remarkably fine whip," she will say. "Why, he drove his own four-in-hand when most boys are scarcely capable of managing a rocking-horse."

Just what mamma was I do not know, for her early life is about the only subject on which her lips are hermetically sealed. Regarding this period she is never to be surprised into confidence, even with her children: therefore I suspect things that are perhaps worse than the reality. It is one of her maxims that children who have a sense of low birth never acquire an air of distinction: probably, therefore, she has withheld from us family details which might have overwhelmed our self-respect.

My suspicion is that my maternal grandmother kept a sort of country store, behind whose counter mamma learned those lessons of calculation and bargaining which have stood her in such good stead, and that there, also, she acquired that nice discrimination in human nature which in her amounts to positive genius. It is such a natural surmise that a thriving young huckster should fall in love with the daughter of one of his patrons.

Papa never seemed to have any relatives. If he had, mamma's tact kept them safely in the background of their native Green Mountains.

But once in a while, notwithstanding all her precautions, some of her own people would create consternation in the household by coming, unannounced, to make us a visit. The same visitors never came twice.

Papa's business career was very successful. He failed twice, and was enabled to amass a considerable fortune, which permitted mamma to surround herself with all the luxuries of life, though it did not open to her the doors of really good society. A certain class of people accepted her lavish and well-conducted hospitality, but the doors of the Most Desirable remained obstinately closed to her insinuating appeals, and this fact was the crumpled rose-leaf which spoiled her ambitious day-dreams.

It was doubly unfortunate that her aspirations fell thus far short of attainment, for she was a beautiful woman, calculated to adorn the most select drawing-rooms, and her tact was so perfect that the instinct of etiquette seemed to have been her birthright. Yet, despite all her efforts, her visiting-list maintained but a second-rate sort of character, and during papa's lifetime she never had the satisfaction of quoting *ex cathedra* the sayings and doings of the Most Desirable.

This gratification was reserved to become one of the consolations of her widowhood. One of the most *mal-à-propos* events which have ever disturbed the current of our generally fortunate lives was papa's death, which occurred when I was thirteen and Élise nine years old. If Providence had only seen fit to remove him a little earlier or later in his career, things would have been very different with us; for his affairs would have been left in a far more satisfactory condition. As it was, he passed away on the eve of his third failure, and, not having sufficiently secured himself against the *contre-temps*, when the estate came to be administered it transpired that the amount heretofore settled upon mamma was our sole means of support.

One can easily divine how severe a shock papa's death was under these circumstances. Here was poor mamma, whose life (as she used to observe pathetically to her friends) had been one long dream of ease and luxury,—which, however, had been nothing but a dream for the first twenty years of her existence,—suddenly reduced to the necessity of a vulgar calculation of ways and means! Who, she would ask plaintively, could expect a woman of her bringing up to support herself and her two children on the income of a paltry hundred and fifty thousand dollars?

A young man, whose uncle was one of the administrators of papa's estate, proved himself a valuable friend and counsellor in these perplexing difficulties. This was Paul Sturgis, who was then studying law in his uncle's office, and who was a great admirer of mamma. He was a frequent visitor at our house, and Élise and I were fiercely jealous of his attentions. I was then at the age of hero-worship, and considered his dark, clever face and kind gray eyes the most beautiful things in the world.

Well, even now, after ten years' familiarity with various types of manly beauty, I think Paul's—but come! that is neither here nor there. I am straying from my purpose, which is to relate how cleverly Paul cut the Gordian knot of mamma's embarrassment.

He was lunching with us one day, *en famille*, and mamma had, as usual, harked back to her piteous position, bemoaning the curtailing of her expenditures, the cutting down of her establishment, etc. Paul was, I fancy, growing a little weary of the everlasting subject, for his attention seemed more occupied with us children, who were trying to converse together in French, than with mamma's endless *pitié de soi-même*, for suddenly he interrupted her:

"What villanous stuff these monkeys speak, Mrs. Hilliard! I have an idea. Why don't you take the children abroad and educate them properly? You can live like a princess there on your income, besides giving them such advantages as will be of inestimable benefit to them."

He argued the case like the lawyer he was,—not that it required much urging, for mamma "took" to the idea at once. With Paul's aid she succeeded in renting our New York house to an excellent tenant, and, sooner than one could have thought it possible, we had pulled up stakes, concluded all our preparations, and left America for a longer term of years than we then imagined.

I think one of my pleasantest recollections of childish experiences is that voyage. We all proved good sailors, and Élise and I were in the highest spirits at the prospect of the new scenes we were about to enter upon. On the second day out an incident occurred which perhaps, insignificant as it appeared to me then, gave the key-note to my after-life.

We children were playing ring-toss on deck in the afternoon, having a capital time amusing ourselves and mamma too, who sat at a little distance wrapped in her luxurious steamer-garment and looking the personification of high-bred beauty and dignity; for, wherever she may have got it I know not, but she certainly has the *air noble* to a remarkable degree, and her refinement of manner, if acquired, is quite as satisfactory as the genuine thing. As we were thus enjoying ourselves, I noticed that a young girl about my own age had approached with a maid and was gazing wistfully at us.

There is a free-masonry about children that exacts no ceremony of introduction, and before long we had prevailed upon the stranger, who required little urging, to join our game. She was a tall, ungainly specimen of humanity, and as mamma saw our disposition to gregariousness thus indulging itself, she called me to her.

"Evelyn, do you know who that child is?" she asked.

"No, mamma," I replied, "but I'll soon find out."

Before I had a chance to fulfil my intention, an exclamation from the maid brought an expression of awed satisfaction to mamma's face:

"Miss Josephine, take care! Neither my lord nor my lady would like you to play so rudely."

Mamma, looking like one who has received a divine revelation, turned to me:

"Go, my darling, go at once back to your game. It is all right. On no account ask the young lady who she is. You have my permission to play with her."

A little later a gentleman came up from below and addressed some

question to the maid. What it was I do not know, but it evidently related to the new friends her charge had found, for she looked significantly at mamma and then at us, as if explaining our relationship; then he addressed the child:

"Josephine, your mother wishes to speak to you: say *au revoir* to your young friends, and run to her." He turned to mamma. "Pardon me, madam," he said, "but I desire to thank you for the pleasure your children have afforded my young niece."

He looked at mamma with the admiring look with which all men used to regard her, and smiled pleasantly upon us. Now mamma's fine tact displayed itself. Instead of showing a fluttering consciousness of the condescension of aristocracy, she drew herself erect from her lounging attitude and met his courteous overtures with a grave, cold bow, then, calling Élise to her, pretended to occupy herself in adjusting some part of the child's dress, according the stranger no further notice.

Oh, what a subtle divination is tact, and how essentially feminine! What masculine mind could have shown so keen and intuitive a perception of insular prejudice, and so accurately have adjusted its conduct in accordance therewith!

The next day the prim maid brought mamma a card,—a veritable reward of merit:

"Lady Emily Starkweather's compliments to Mrs. Hilliard, and she begs that Miss Evelyn and Miss Lizzie" (I forgot to say that Élise was ungallieized in those days) "may be permitted to share her daughter's birthday-cake in Lady Emily Starkweather's state-room."

Mamma restrained her exultation with wonderful dignity as she returned a reply accepting the honor done us, and then showed another diplomatic touch, by dressing us in our simplest attire for the feast. Then, having received an elaborate exhortation as to the strict decorum we were to observe on the forthcoming auspicious occasion, we were permitted to proceed to the scene of the festivities.

Shortly after this Lady Emily made some conversational advances to mamma, which were met by an admirable *juste milieu* of cordiality on the latter's part; a little later Lord Denbigh was introduced, and before we had been a week together we found ourselves on a most satisfactory footing of equality with the Nobility—mamma always pronounces the word with a capital N.

Mamma and Lady Emily Starkweather developed a singular congeniality of spirit, which drew them into a mutually enjoyable intimacy, and Lord Denbigh, a man some years their junior, devoted much of his time to us. He was a quiet, scholarly person, who yet had a good deal of fun under his reserve, and fickle Lizzie at once transferred her admiration from Paul to her new friend.

Josephine—Fifi, as her mother called her—was extremely communicative regarding family matters, and every night Lizzie and I underwent a pumping process at mamma's hands, during which she extracted, for her own edification, all the facts of which we had become possessed during the day.

The sum and substance of the information thus gained was as follows:

Lady Emily—who has ever been our kindest and most influential friend, the veritable good genius of our lives—was the widow of Sir James Starkweather, an exceedingly wealthy baronet, who had left her possessed not only of a large fortune but of an equally large responsibility in the shape of a family of seven children, five of whom were boys. She had never been very robust, and her physicians had recently ordered a sea-voyage for her and Fifi, also of a delicate organization. Her boys were already in school, and her daughter Fanny, a child about Lizzie's age, had been placed in a convent in Paris,—Lady Emily being a strict Roman Catholic. Lord Denbigh, who was a bachelor and therefore free to roam wherever he chose, had proposed to act as his sister's escort if she would make the voyage to America, a *terra incognita* to his personal experience. Thus it was that we met them returning to England after a three months' absence.

During the leisure of the voyage mamma disclosed her purpose of educating us abroad to Lady Emily, who took a warm interest in her plans and gave her much valuable and judicious advice, tempered with a regard to economics that made her co-operation of practical benefit. She suggested the convent in which her own daughter was being educated as an excellent school for us, proposing that mamma should secure rooms in some neighboring *pension* and enter us in the institution as day-scholars, thereby retaining the privilege of having us with her during a part of the day.

There was a sort of romantic and picturesque atmosphere about the word convent that at once appealed to mamma's sympathies; then, perhaps, she may have foreseen, in the co-education of their children, a closer cementing of the bond already formed between herself and Lady Emily, involving future possibilities of dazzling brilliancy. Yet, not to appear too eager, she suggested one or two feeble obstacles.

Perhaps there would be difficulties in receiving Protestants? No; Lady Emily was quite sure such was not the case. But they might require references, or retainers, or whatever they called their absurd precautions? (Mamma was wont to get a little confused at times in her choice of words.) Again Lady Emily reassured her, with the assertion that a letter which she would gladly furnish would be sufficient *cachet* for any one.

Having thus obtained what she desired, an introduction to Paris as Lady Emily Starkweather's friend, mamma permitted herself to enthuse a little over her new acquaintance, and hoped that some day she should be able, etc., etc., which little ebullition of gush increased Lady Emily's crescent affection, by flattering her self-esteem in the rôle of kind-hearted patroness.

When we reached London, Lady Emily insisted that we should go to her house in Belgrave Square, rather than to a hotel, to rest and recuperate before pursuing our journey to Paris, where we were to begin our studies at once.

We remained in London a few days, and then left for Paris, mamma being anxious for us to begin immediately at the convent. Mamma lost no time in presenting Lady Emily's letter to the Mother Superior, who received us kindly, speaking of the English lady with a respect

and deference which confirmed her assertion of possessing influence in the establishment.

For six years Élisé and I remained regular pupils of the *Sacré Cœur*, and of that period of incubation which precedes the birth of the full-fledged society girl it is unnecessary to give the details. Not a moment of our time was left unfilled, and I can assure you that the training of a Professional Belle is no joke. My mental education was mere child's-play compared with that of my physical being. Outside of my conventual instruction I had lessons in dancing and riding; daily exercise in a *gymnase*, for the development of my figure and for the attainment of an easy carriage; a regular constitutional of forty minutes in all weathers, for the improvement of my complexion; twice a week I was subjected to the treatment of a manicure and pedicure, and once a week I spent an hour under the hands of a *coiffeur* who had the care of my hair, in addition to the half-hour's brushing which mamma's maid bestowed upon it every night.

If any one imagines that a girl becomes a Professional of the best type by right divine, let my experience undeceive him, for if ever a career required self-discipline and patient self-denial in its inception it was mine. It is a period of self-subordination of which no girl is capable unless she be under the dominion of a weak and determined mother. To many women the happiness and freedom of their children would appear paramount to mere external improvements; but no such foolish considerations weighed with mamma against the brilliant future for which she was preparing me, and no amount of coaxing or teasing ever constrained her to abate one jot of the rigor of her method.

Yet I would not have you understand from the above that determination and adherence to a strict regimen are alone necessary to success. *Du tout!* There must be a certain indescribable something, a sort of divine afflatus of the body physical, to start with. And this is not given to every woman, any more than inspiration is bestowed upon every poet; but I had it. It is as impossible to define as genius, and almost as rare,—a subtle essence, variously called fascination, magnetism, attraction, etc., more powerful than grace or beauty, wit or talent, having which a woman may shrug her shoulders at regular types and snap her fingers even in the face of Fortune.

When I entered the convent of the *Sacré Cœur* I was a gawky, unformed child of thirteen, with a pale, freckled face, a quantity of loose, reddish hair, a mouth filled with white but irregular teeth, and a lank, stooping figure; but even thus handicapped I interested people by virtue of this unnamable and indescribable quality. When I left the institution I was a girl of nineteen, so *comme il faut* that I could not walk in the streets without creating remark. I was tall, with a slender, well-developed figure, to which my erect and well-trained carriage lent an air of distinction; my complexion was still pale, but so clear and fair that people called it transparent, flushing only from over-fatigue or exercise; my teeth had been forced into their proper places, and the slow, sweet smile which I had cultivated brought them frequently into public notice; while my hair was a magnificent chestnut, flecked throughout with ruddy gleams.

There was sufficient capital for moderate success even in these endowments, but to them I could add a *savoir-vivre* of almost Gallic perfection, a heart sufficiently cold to protect my self-interest and guard me from foolish entanglements, and a style and *chic* which even a Frenchwoman might covet. Every suspicion of a talent had been cultivated to its utmost capacity, and I had been taught to handle my shred of a voice so dexterously that it was accredited with far greater scope and power than it possessed. I spoke four languages well,—English, French, German, and Italian,—and was well up in modern history.

Thanks to an excellent memory, learning had been easy to me. In one word, I was “accomplished” when I bade a final farewell to the good sisters of the *Sacré Cœur* and left Paris, to enter the gay world of London society under the auspices of Lady Emily, who had volunteered to manage my presentation at court and start me on the road to social success.

We had frequently visited her during our holidays, and she had remained a most kind and considerate friend, corresponding regularly with mamma and very grateful for the trifling kindnesses we had shown Fanny, who had become *Élise*’s devoted friend, and who was in despair at their separation. Mamma desired still to have *Élise* under her own eyes, and determined to “finish” her in London. She was a pretty child, in a sweet, infantile fashion, but of too natural and unconventional a nature ever to pay for much trouble. Mamma acknowledged this sadly, but was too kind-hearted actually to neglect her.

“I will give her every advantage,” she would say to me, pathetically, “for I never could endure the reproach of partiality; but, alas! the poor child is a true *Hilliard*.”

Before a babe enters the world a certain amount of preparation is considered necessary to its reception; before my *début*—which is the real birth of every well-ordered female child—a frightful amount of time, money, and thought was given to the furnishing of a wardrobe befitting my future requirements. For this purpose mamma opened her purse wide, endowing me with a liberal hand. A clearance was made of all my old duds, and *Élise* came in for the spoil. Mamma had long foreseen this necessity, and had been fortunate enough to discover a Frenchman whose fit and style were irreproachable and whose prices were sufficiently moderate to permit of continued existence after indulging in one of his confections. To him she took me.

“*Monsieur Jacquet*,” she said, with an accent that always nearly drove me wild, “I have brought a new study to you. She is about entering London society under the auspices of one of the Nobility. She will go everywhere and meet every one. Look at her! Will she not be worth dressing? And what an advertisement to one who shall make his prices come within my limited means!”

She clasped her hands enthusiastically and looked at the milliner, who, to do his discrimination credit, was regarding me with evident admiration. I stood before him in my best attitude, for I knew how important it was to make a good impression, and felt it a sacred duty to assist mamma, on this momentous occasion, as much as possible. After a short, mute observation, the little man turned to her:

"Mademoiselle has a future before her, *sans doute*. She has more than beauty,—grace and carriage. She will do me credit; and I shall be glad to undertake her at rates as low as I can make them."

He seemed honestly impressed with my usefulness as a card for his business, and mamma forthwith gave him orders for the entire outfit, merely naming the sum which must cover the whole bill. All details as to material, color, fashion, and cut were confided entirely to his judgment, and we left his shop under cover of a parting adjuration from mamma:

"Remember, monsieur, I am confiding a sacred charge to you. If you do well by my daughter, there is no limit to the patronage I shall bring to your establishment."

The little man bowed elaborately. "Madame may rely upon me. I have her interests at heart from this moment."

Then followed a season of fitting, trying on, etc., which resulted in a manner satisfactory to our most exacting desires. Jacquet fairly outdid himself, and on the day I left Paris I felt a sense of gratitude toward him and mamma that would have brought tears to my eyes, had not such evidences of sensibility been detrimental to my appearance.

Lady Emily had kindly exerted herself to engage a very comfortable suite of apartments for us in Half-Moon Street, and we drove thither at once on our arrival in London. Mamma's maid had accompanied us, and, as our meals were to be served in our own dining-room by the people of the house, we determined that the services of a boy in buttons would be all the additional attendance we should need.

At last I stood on the threshold of life! What a vision lay before me! For this moment I had undergone years of preparation and mamma had sacrificed herself to exile among strangers. What if I should fail of success! I laughed at the thought: self-depreciation is not one of my weaknesses. I should succeed. I felt the consciousness of power steal through my veins as I sank to sleep on the first night of my emancipation.

CHAPTER II.

THE next morning we were dawdling over a late breakfast, when I came upon a paragraph in the *Morning Post*, which I was lazily scanning, that made my face flush with pleasure. It was the first time I had ever seen myself in print, and I began to feel impressed with a sense of my own importance.

"Mamma," I cried, "only listen to this! 'Among the distinguished Americans now residing in London are Mrs. Frederick Hilliard and her two daughters. Mrs. Hilliard has taken apartments in Half-Moon Street, and her elder daughter, Miss Evelyn Hilliard, is to be one of the season's *débutantes*. Although until now a school-girl, Miss Hilliard's beauty has attracted much notice in Paris, where she has been a pupil of the *Sacré Cœur*, and London society is promised a rare acquisition in her advent. The young lady will be introduced

at court by Lady Denbigh, who returns to the world from her seclusion at Denbigh Court for the purpose of presenting her grand-daughter, Miss Josephine Starkweather, also a *débutante*."

Mamma received the intelligence with an equanimity that aroused my suspicions.

"Mamma, did you put it in?" I asked.

"Yes, my love," she replied, calmly.

"Oh, dear! What a disappointment!"

"You didn't lay yourself out much for Fifi," broke in Elise.

Mamma raised her hands in horror:

"My child, what an expression! 'Lay yourself out'! What a terrible little vulgarian you are! Josephine Starkweather is beyond comment."

"Well, Fifi is plain, but then she is so kind and good."

"Kindness and goodness are rather handicapping qualities in society, my dear. Josephine may be morally *sans reproche*, but she has physically sinned beyond pardon.—What is it, Julie?"

"A note, madame. Milady's footman has just delivered it."

Mamma opened and read it, then turned to me:

"It is from Lady Emily, Evelyn. She says, 'I am to have a breakfast at half-after eleven to-day, at which I should like Evelyn to be present if she is not too fatigued. It will be an excellent opportunity for her to meet a few really nice people, and these small affairs serve to rub off any *gaucherie* that may afflict novices. I will send the brougham at eleven. Yours, etc.' Come, love, you haven't a moment to lose!—Julie, unpack the box containing Miss Hilliard's green broadcloth immediately, and then come at once to dress her hair."

Mamma was a good general, and at eleven o'clock I stepped into Lady Emily's brougham *en route* for my first taste of the cup of dissipation. I underwent a rapid inspection at her ladyship's hands, and, though she said little, being strongly opposed to flattery, I felt that I had sustained her criticism admirably.

She was a thorough woman of the world, from the crown of her finely-shaped, gray-thatched head to the toes of her aristocratic feet, and, now that her health was quite re-established, she was bent upon enjoying to the utmost the privileges which her money and position afforded her. I think—though she never betrayed the fact by word or sign—that Fifi's lack of attractiveness was a great disappointment to her, for she was an ardent admirer of beauty and loved to have pretty girls and handsome men about her. For the latter she never lacked, as her five sons were excellent specimens of different types of manly beauty. Two of them, Sir Robert, the eldest, and Julian, the youngest, were in her boudoir when I entered, and were less sparing of flattering commentary than their mother.

Robby and I had always been great pals, and as we had not met during the last holidays—he being absent on a buffalo-hunting expedition to my native wilds—he vowed that he discovered a great change in me.

"Gad, Evelyn! you're a positive stunner!—Isn't she, mother? Indeed, I shall have my hands full keeping off the men, for I'm chief

aide-de-camp in the coming campaign. Poor Fifi! Mamma, you haven't shown your usual discretion, in exhibiting her in the market cheek by jowl with such a *rara avis*."

Lady Emily flushed angrily, and was about to reprimand her first-born, when the door opened and Josephine entered. It must have been trying for a woman of Lady Emily's keen admiration for beauty to present to the world so irredeemably ugly a duckling as Fifi, and I can only account for her willingness to voluntarily submit her to the unfavorable comparisons which would infallibly be drawn between two such dissimilar candidates for social distinction, on the theory of reflected light, for her ladyship, kind-hearted though she was, was yet shrewd enough to consider her daughter's welfare to the utter exclusion of my interests, and to use me, unhesitatingly, to promote her good.

Josephine had never outgrown her angularity, indeed, time had rather increased it, and the delicacy of constitution for the benefit of which she had been travelling when we first met her betrayed itself in the stooping shoulders, narrow chest, pale, sallow complexion, and lack-lustre eyes. Her kindness and sweetness of disposition were unailing, but I think her mother would willingly have submitted to the temper of a fiend if it had been accompanied by a more attractive face.

We had time only for most hurried greetings, for Lady Emily had already left the room to receive her guests, desiring me to follow with Josephine: so together we entered the long drawing-room, at the farther end of which stood Lady Emily with a small, insignificant-looking man in glasses, whose face wore a weary, bored expression underlaid with a baffling stratum of what I afterwards found to be keen intelligence. As we moved slowly down the long room and came within short range of his handicapped eyes, I saw them brighten and heard almost a suggestion of enthusiasm in the softly-uttered words he addressed to his companion:

"My dear lady, I was quite unprepared to find your daughter so beautiful!"

Poor Lady Emily! I never admired any acquirement more profoundly than I did the self-possession she exhibited in completely ignoring the unfortunate mistake so mortifying to her maternal vanity. Taking a step forward, she laid her hand on mine, and said, sweetly,—

"Evelyn, dear, permit me to present Mr. Chisholm.—Miss Hilliard can give you much information about the country whose political code you so admire, Mr. Chisholm, as she is one of its children."

"Its political code is not, henceforth, the product of that great land which I chiefly admire," returned the stranger, with a significant look, as he bowed in acknowledgment of the introduction; then Lady Emily turned to present him to Fifi, and, while he exchanged some conventional phrases with her, her mother murmured in my ear,—

"This terrible little creature is a Power, Evelyn. He represents one of the leading society journals of London, and his approval is worth more to a *débutante* than the admiration of a hundred ordinary men.—I was saying to Miss Hilliard," she continued, going, without apparent intention, to the rescue of poor Fifi, who was hopelessly stuck fast in that conversational slough of despond, a deadly pause, from

which she could not extricate herself, "how disappointed I am to be unable to secure a box for Monday night. My son delayed until too late, and now we are *au désespoir*."

Mr. Chisholm looked at me while he answered his hostess.

"A state of things not to be tolerated," he said, smiling. "I pledge myself to relieve your misery, on one condition."

"The conditions of the powerful are the opportunities of the unfortunate," Lady Emily paraphrased.

"Then permit me to act as escort, and I will see to it that your jewels shall have an opportunity to dazzle Patti's hearers."

Lady Emily had scarcely time to acquiesce when fresh guests were announced, and almost immediately afterwards breakfast was served.

There was nothing especially notable about the occasion, save that I really made an impression upon the editor of *Five O'Clock Tea*,—which was in itself an event worthy of congratulation, as I discovered after the guests had departed, when Sir Robert and Lady Emily assured me that in gaining his good will I had won half the battle of fashionable success.

Mr. Chisholm was as good as his word, and when I entered the box which his influence had procured, and saw the lorgnettes levelled at me as I took my seat, my heart went out in a prayer of thanksgiving to Jacquet, whose skill and taste had endowed me with a self-possession which only the consciousness of good style can bestow.

We had many visitors that night, some of whom Lady Emily presented, while others simply received a few cold words of greeting and were permitted to depart without further reward.

"Faust" was half through when Robby Starkweather entered the box with a young fellow whom his mother greeted cordially, calling Fifi's attention from the stage to direct it upon the new-comer. Her pale face grew almost pretty for a moment as she saw whom Robby had brought, and she addressed the stranger with undoubted delight:

"Oh! I am glad to see you, Derry! This is indeed a surprise. When did you get home?"

After he had exchanged a few brief words of greeting with her, during which I did much effective work with my eyes, I was not surprised to see the young man stoop and whisper a request to Josephine. A slight look of disappointment crept over her face as she answered,—

"Certainly.—Evelyn, let me present to you Lord Derrington.—Miss Hilliard is my dearest friend, Derry."

Lord Derrington crossed eagerly to my side.

"Then I cannot understand why we have never met before," he said, smiling with a brightness that made his face very attractive. "I take the liberty of considering myself one of Lady Emily's boys, for you know Denbigh Court and Sheraton join one another."

"Oh, but I am an American savage," I replied. "You have never been in America, Lord Derrington?"

"Indeed yes, and have but just returned."

"Ah! Then you know its terrors, and can sympathize with my delight in escaping them."

"Not exactly," he replied. "I had an awfully good time there,

and think it quite the jolliest place I know. I never saw so many pretty girls or met so many pleasant fellows as I did in New York."

"Yes?" I said, thinking of Paul. "I wish you might have known a friend of mine there: I should love to hear of him from some one who had recently seen him. Letters are so unsatisfactory." There was no affectation in my sigh. Lord Derrington looked at me scrutinizingly, and then said, a little stiffly,—

"I am sorry I can't relieve your anxiety concerning the man in whom you are interested. I don't doubt, however, he is in an enviable condition of prosperity, with your solicitude to insure it."

I was amused at the suggestion of jealousy in his tone. I was beginning to experience a consciousness of power which was quite enthralling. I sighed more deeply, and threw a far-away, yearning expression into my eyes.

"It is so long since I have seen him, and he has promised so often to come over! I wish you might have met Mr. Sturgis, Lord Derrington. I am sure you would have liked him."

Lord Derrington started.

"What! Not Paul Sturgis?" he cried. "Why, I know him very well. I had letters to his uncle from my solicitors. Do you mean Paul?"

I assented, and Lord Derrington looked surprised.

"It is strange he never mentioned you," he said, wonderingly.

I began to feel rather small.

"He would not have been apt to," I said. "We have only just left Paris, and I suppose he did not consider our meeting possible."

The opera was drawing to a close, and as Lord Derrington carefully folded me in my wrap he begged to be allowed to call upon my mother. I thought Lady Emily a little cool toward me on the way home, but we must pay something for success in life, and I felt that I could afford to endure a temporary frigidity in her ladyship for the triumph of seeing the scalp of an earl—the first in the string I meant to wear—dangling at my belt.

The next afternoon mamma and I were having tea together, when Robby Starkweather and Lord Derrington were announced. Mamma had worked like a slave, and the rooms were in pretty fair shape. A box of gorgeous roses had come that morning, bearing his lordship's card, and they served to perfume and adorn the apartment. I had thrust a couple of them into the bosom of my tea-gown, and noted the satisfaction on their sender's face as his eyes fell upon them.

We had a pleasant little hour together. Mamma has the quality of *savoir-faire* to perfection, and through its means people feel at once at home in her house. I could see that she made a most delightful impression upon Derrington; but indeed he was in that pleasant state of satisfaction with the whole world when even the presentation of an Indian squaw would have been regarded as the most desirable thing in mothers.

As they were talking together, Robby took occasion to unbosom himself to me on the subject of his friend.

"Egad, Evelyn," he said, enthusiastically, "you've got Derrington

solid! He's an awfully good fellow, and has no end of rocks. You see, his father, the old earl, was closer than wax; and when he died, five or six years ago, Derry found his coronet better gilded than those of most of the present nobility. The mother would like to hook him for Fifi, but, bless your heart! she can't make any running with you in the field!"

Before the young men left it was arranged that they, with Fifi and myself, should make up a party for the Row the next morning, and as I had no saddle-horse I was to use one of Robby's; for I did not care to avail myself of the one which Lord Derrington wished to place at my disposal.

A few days later Lady Emily informed me that Lady Denbigh would arrive in London in the course of the week, and the thought of the coming Drawing-Room filled my mind, even to the exclusion of my devoted admirer.

Everything waited upon our presentation, as Lady Emily desired it to inaugurate our *débuts*. Our gowns were exquisite,—that which was to adorn Fifi being the more costly and elegant, though that which I should adorn would undoubtedly receive enough lustre from my person to render it the more remarkable. It was of white silk mull heavily embroidered with marguerites which were marvels of the *ouvrière's* handiwork. The sleeveless bodice was cut very low, and a garniture of the delicate flowers bordered the neck and held it in place upon the shoulders. A long court train of ivory satin fell from the back and stretched far behind me, lying three yards upon the ground,—a fashion *de rigueur* on such occasions; and the long lace veil and plumes became me *à merveille*.

The style and fabric of our gowns had formed a subject of discussion at afternoon teas at Lady Emily's and at home, and the boys, as we called Robby and Derrington, had prevailed upon me to grant them a glimpse of myself attired for the fray on the afternoon prior to its occurrence.

"You must rehearse your courtesy again, Miss Hilliard," pleaded Derrington. "You should be content with nothing short of absolute perfection, and, while you may be quite satisfactory in the privacy of your own apartment, the eyes of the world may disconcert you. Why not imagine Bob and me the world and avail yourself of one more opportunity?"

"You may be satisfied to represent the world to Miss Hilliard, Derry, but nothing short of the queen herself shall content me. I will be her gracious Majesty. Viva Regina!—Now, Evelyn, go, like a good girl."

Mamma nodded consent, and I left the room to make the desired change of toilette. With Julie's assistance the beautiful gown was soon arranged upon me, and, as she carefully held the dainty train from contact with the floor, I proceeded to the drawing-room, pausing outside and motioning Julie to let fall the train; then, throwing the door wide open, I swept magnificently into the glare of all the gas-jets, which Robby had turned on to their full extent.

With my head held superbly aloft, I scarce deigned a look at the

group assembled about the tea-table, but, assuming a haughty elegance of bearing, I glided the length of the room and suddenly fell into a profound and reverential courtesy before Robby; then, with a peal of laughter, I glanced at mamma and awoke to the mortifying consciousness that a stranger was sitting beside her. Covered with confusion, I was about to stammer forth an apology, feeling indignant enough with those who had allowed me to make such a fool of myself, when another glance at the intruder turned my apology into greeting, my embarrassment into excitement.

"Paul!" I cried. "Paul! Is it really you?"

He had risen and come forward, and, as he took my hand in the old, familiar clasp and I met the kind, gray eyes I remembered so well, for a moment the intervening years with their burden of fashionable training vanished, my hardly-acquired self-possession slipped away, and I stood, feeling myself again an awkward, unfledged school-girl, longing for, yet despairing of, this man's approval. His voice roused me:

"Indeed, Miss Evelyn, your memory is more accurate than mine. I confess myself baffled in the attempt to discover one trace of the child I once knew."

"But you have changed not at all," I replied, feeling a little chilled by the title before my name. "I should have known you anywhere."

He bowed. "Unfortunately, the period of transformation had already passed for me when you left America. Besides, I am not the sort of grub that becomes a gorgeous butterfly."

"I trust that mamma had already explained to you what, else, must have seemed a display of unpardonable vanity. These boys——" I turned toward Robby and Lord Derrington, but stopped, disconcerted a little by the latter's expression. He evidently had not forgotten my enthusiastic reference to Paul, and was watching us with undeniable jealousy in his usually frank, happy eyes. "Lord Derrington," I concluded, "don't you and Robby feel that you ought to assume the weight of my apologies for so foolish an appearance as mine? What can Mr. Sturgis think of me?"

Paul uttered a disclaimer, significant of his thorough comprehension of the scene, and I, excusing myself, moved toward the door to remove my magnificence. When I rejoined the tea-drinkers I found that Derrington had disappeared, a fact which concerned me little, so occupied was I in learning the cause of Paul's coming abroad.

"It was a sudden decision," he said, "due only to the emergency of a lawsuit which obliged some one to come over to secure important testimony. Miss Hilliard, you are wonderfully changed, indeed. How strange it is that we reckon so little upon the work of time in thinking of our friends!"

"Surely, Paul, you did not expect to find Evelyn still a child!" exclaimed mamma.

"Well, no," he replied. "But you will pardon my saying that I had not discovered in the child I knew such promise as has been fulfilled in the woman."

My heart beat gladly. Evidently he was charmed by the result of the change. It was strange how highly I rated his good opinion. He dined with us that night, and I played and sang most of the evening, encouraged thereto by his urgent desire to hear me. Apparently I fascinated him, perhaps owing to his attempts to discover lost traces of the child he had thought so slightly of.

As he left he said to mamma,—

"Mrs. Hilliard, may I come often while my stay in London lasts? I have but two weeks here, and want to see as much of you as possible."

Mamma cordially assented, and I think my eyes seconded her permission, for he colored slightly as he met them. I wonder what there is in some eyes to play such havoc in well-regulated veins!

CHAPTER III.

THE fourteenth of May was as beautiful a day as the most exacting *débutante* could desire. The sun shone bright as an augury of a golden future, and the atmosphere was as soft and warm as the complacent humor of a pretty woman. I woke in the gayest spirits, ate an early breakfast, and took a cab to Lady Emily's for final instructions concerning the ceremony of presentation.

I found the household in Belgrave Square in utter despair, for poor Josephine had succumbed to one of her bilious attacks, and it was doubtful if she would be sufficiently recovered by noon to appear at court. Her mother looked at my blooming face a little resentfully.

"No need to inquire how you are, Evelyn," she said, with a sigh.

"No; I am superbly well," I replied, "and supremely happy. I am so sorry for Fifi. My love to her, please, and tell her that she *must* be all right by noon."

Immediately upon my return home the process of adornment began. I was simply a lay figure in the hands of the hair-dresser, mamma, and Julie, and submitted myself without protest to their tender mercies. My hair was charmingly arranged, and the three white feathers with the fragile, flowing lace pendant made a most becoming head-dress. The exquisite robe, fitting me to absolute perfection, was carefully adjusted upon my slender figure, and during the whole process Élise and Julie kept up a running commentary of admiration and remark.

My bouquet was beautiful, and I regarded it most tenderly, as it had been Paul's contribution to the great event. I was proud of myself as I took a critical survey of my appearance in my long mirror before assuming the wrap which Julie held ready to throw carefully over my magnificence.

"Think I will do, mamma?" I asked dispassionately of my parent, who had retreated to a little distance in order to get a better general effect of the work of art she had accomplished. "Do you feel that I shall do you credit, or do you find something lacking in the *tout-ensemble*?"

"Dear child," she replied, gazing at me through a humid haze,

"you are all that I could wish. I feel indeed that I have not lived and striven in vain."

An hour later, Lady Denbigh, Josephine—who had recovered sufficiently to serve as dummy for the support of her beautiful gown—and I took our places in the long line of carriages that filed slowly through the Green Park, where delay after delay prevented our making the goal for which we were striving. At last, after what seemed centuries of waiting, our turn came, and we drew slowly up before the imposing portals of Buckingham Palace.

Had I thought that our term of probation would cease upon our admission within the precincts of the palace, I should have been greatly at fault; for now came the difficulty of mounting the staircase, where such a crush prevailed as filled me with utter terror lest I should be obliged to present to my adopted sovereign a limp and drooping spectacle in lieu of the one whose beauty had called forth the maternal thanksgiving.

But *tout vient à qui sait attendre*, and at last, preceded by the white staff, following (oh, so slowly, and at such a distance!) Lady Denbigh and Josephine, my turn came to sweep up the vast apartment. For a moment I felt the eyes of the world upon me, and trembled violently; then I steadied my fluttering nerves, and, holding myself erect, with an air born of extreme embarrassment, but which passed for ease and grace, I approached her Majesty, and, placing my hand beneath that gracious palm which sways the fate of nations, I touched it with my lips and sank to the ground in the profound reverence I had so long practised.

Now began my real initiation into the fashionable world. Lady Emily sent out cards for a series of "At Homes" with my name as well as Fifi's inscribed beneath her own. Invitations flowed in upon me in a ceaseless stream, and Mr. Chisholm proved his appreciation of Lady Emily's hospitality by inserting many complimentary paragraphs concerning me in *Five O'Clock Tea*. To be sure, a little of the edge of my vanity was dulled by the lack of discrimination these paragraphs showed between Fifi and myself. Her name was invariably coupled with mine, and we were equally the objects of superlative flattery.

Lord Derrington was my shadow, and it was evident that Lady Emily had resigned herself to the disappointment of her fond hopes of uniting him to Josephine. He was beginning to bore me horribly; for, though I would heartily have liked him as a friend and a good comrade, he had grown so capricious and *exigeant* that I was often obliged to snub him and indicate in rather brusque terms the limit of his prerogatives. He had established himself as Paul's *valet-de-place*, and insisted on taking him to all the festivities of the season, and I therefore saw more of my countryman than would otherwise have been the case.

I think, notwithstanding my boasted *sang-froid*, my head was a little turned just at first by my success, and I rather gloried in showing off before Paul, thinking that he would appreciate me in proportion to the admiration I excited. He showed me my mistake a few days before he left London. I had come in from making a round of

calls with Fifi and Lady Emily, and found Sir Robert and Paul drinking tea with mamma, while Élise presided at the table. I took the cup that Robby handed me, and we chatted a few moments on various topics. Suddenly he said,—

"Oh, by the bye, Miss Hilliard, how about the bazaar? Are you to be at Mrs. Brander-Burton's booth, as the journals say? Derrington has been asked to be marshal; but he is awaiting your decision."

"Dear me!" I exclaimed, rather ill-naturedly, for I was tired and cross, besides which Paul had scarcely spoken to me since I came in, continuing to chat with mamma and to tease Élise, quite ignoring my presence: "I wish that young man would decide his own affairs! Why should he hang upon my skirts so? He's nothing to me!"

"No? But perhaps he hopes to be, and is qualifying for the situation. However, setting him aside, I wish to know whether I can spend my poor income at my own discretion for the coming two weeks, or whether it is to be saved to purchase a fleeting smile from the beautiful American."

I laughed, for my increasing reputation was a standing joke between us.

"Ask mamma," I replied. "For she is the arbiter of your shekels' destiny. I am dying to accept Mrs. Burton's invitation, but am doubtful of mamma's puritanical scruples."

Mamma, hearing her name mentioned, paused in her conversation with Paul and addressed Robby:

"What is it, Sir Robert?"

"I am anxious to know your dictum regarding the bazaar. May Miss Hilliard dispense roses, blessed by her dainty lips, at a sovereign each?"

Mamma turned to Paul:

"What do you think, Paul? This bazaar is for the relief of the sufferers by the recent fire, and is to be a tremendously smart affair. Mrs. Brander-Burton has asked Evelyn to assist her, but I am doubtful of the propriety of such publicity."

Paul hesitated a moment, while his lips grew set and firm; then, shrugging his shoulders carelessly, he replied,—

"Why not? Miss Evelyn will have an excellent opportunity of furthering her ambitious designs. Surely, publicity is the last thing she would shrink from. If you ask whether I would allow my sister to hawk her favors in the market-place, I should answer you, very decidedly not; but then Miss Hilliard does many things which I would not permit my sister to do."

His cold, cutting tone stung me to the quick, and for once mortified vanity got the better of me and prompted words which in cold blood I would have died sooner than utter. I rose and looked him fully in the face, while I laughed a short, significant little laugh.

"In—deed!" I said, slowly. "Perhaps Miss Hilliard has temptations which Mr. Sturgis's sister will ever be exempt from."

He started to his feet and grew deadly pale: I do not doubt that, if I had been a man, he would have struck me. Then he turned to mamma:

"Mrs. Hilliard, I regret to be obliged to part from you so suddenly, but I have many engagements before the steamer sails. I feel that I owe you an apology for my rude manner of speaking of your daughter. Pray, for the sake of our long friendship, pardon and forget my unintentional boorishness. Good-by; and many thanks for your kind hospitality.—Farewell, Elise.—Starkweather, I shall see you again." He bowed distantly to me, shook mamma's hand cordially, and kissed Elise, who followed him from the room, begging him to come again before leaving England, while mamma and Sir Robert sat gazing blankly at me, as if awaiting an explanation of his conduct.

"Oh, Evelyn!" cried mamma, as soon as the door closed upon Paul, "what have you done?"

"Only given the fellow a taste of what he deserves," cried Sir Robert, warmly. "Pretty lofty airs, indeed, for a man who has just insulted a lady to take upon himself! I never heard a more wanton attack than his upon Evelyn, and she did not show half the spirit I should have expected from her in her reply."

"Stop, Robby!" I cried, peremptorily, already overcome with remorse and contrition. "Don't, for heaven's sake, try to extenuate my abominable and malicious speech. You are quite ignorant of the terrible truth that gave it point. Mary Sturgis, Paul's only sister, is a horribly deformed hunchback."

I left the room hurriedly, while Sir Robert was muttering something about Paul's beginning the affair, and, in the heat of my self-reproach, sat down at my davenport and wrote Paul a note of heartfelt apology. I was as abject as a woman careful of her own dignity could be, and begged him to show his forgiveness by coming again to see us before he sailed.

But he never came. The day of his departure I received a brief note from him, in which he assured me, in formal, courteous words, that he entirely blamed himself in the matter, and trusted that I would cease to regard it otherwise than as he did,—as a matter of indifference. He begged my pardon for having forgotten the respect due my mother's daughter, ascribing it to the low nervous condition to which unwonted social dissipation had reduced him.

Alas! I could not banish the affair from my mind as easily as he, and for many weeks his white, stern face and deep, angry tones continued to haunt me. Gradually, however, they became distant memories, vibrating at intervals in the heart which I was fast covering with a hard crust of worldliness. I do not doubt that it had been in Paul Sturgis's power then, had he so willed it, to rescue me from the career which has brought me so much celebrity, but so little real happiness. I was impressionable then, easily influenced, and already sufficiently swayed by childish memories to regard him as a sort of hero; but fate willed it otherwise, and he returned to America, leaving me to plunge the deeper into the maelstrom which soon completely engulfed me.

Notwithstanding Paul's disapprobation, mamma finally yielded her consent to Mrs. Brander-Burton's entreaties, and I was duly enrolled as one of her aids in the forthcoming charitable enterprise. The affair was under the patronage of H. R. H. the Princess of Wales, and to

the Honorable Mrs. Burton—who was one of the ladies-in-waiting upon the princess—had been intrusted the flower-table, that most desirable stall, where roses fairly blush at the prices set upon their innocent sweetness, and the pale lily shrinks in affright at her own value.

Mrs. Brander-Burton was a widow, whose two sons were the objects of the most comical despair on the part of their sole surviving parent. She was a thoroughly insequent sort of person, utterly unable to cope with the emergencies of life, and falling back upon her sister-in-law, Lady Graham, for advice and counsel in the smallest details. Having no brothers herself, her boys were a constant surprise to her, and their slightest irregularities of conduct inspired her with a certainty of their ultimate destruction. She was a woman of immediate attachments, which were as ardent as they were evanescent, an intense admirer of beauty, and with one idea regulating and informing all her thought and action: the princess was the motive power of her universe,—the model of her life, judgment of whom was a sacrilege, and admiration a most natural homage.

I had met her at Lady Emily's, where she immediately singled me out for elaborate attention, owing to a remark she had heard made by the princess.

"Oh, dear Miss Hilliard!" she exclaimed, gazing at me as one would at a masterpiece that had received the highest honors of the Academy, "I have so *longed* to know you, ever since I heard the dear princess speak of you. How *happy* for you to have impressed her so *forcibly* with your beauty at the Drawing-Room!"

"Was I indeed so fortunate?" I asked, really gratified.

"Yes, yes, you were. 'Who is that exquisitely pretty Miss Hilliard?' she asked afterwards, and fortunately Fanny Herkomer had met you somewhere and could tell her Highness. I felt that I *must* know you, you know, for I'm *sure* you're destined to be one of the persons one *ought* to know, and *may* I call on Mrs. Hilliard? *Pray* tell me her day," etc., etc.

A few days later I received a card to a levee at Marlborough House, where I really secured a few pleasant words from the lips of the most beloved lady in the land.

Josephine was not invited to assist at the bazaar, but I had asked Mrs. Brander-Burton for an appointment for Sir Robert, which squared matters in Lady Emily's eyes. I wore a gown of jetted lace, cut tremendously *décolleté*, with my pearl collar, and a pearl marguerite, which I greatly affected, in my hair. All the flowers that had been sent me I had donated to the stall, only reserving for myself a great bunch of violets which had borne Derrington's card.

Mrs. Burton was in ecstasies over my appearance, and augured from it quick sales and large profits for her stall. Of course the professionals were out in great form, but I had over them the advantage of freshness and novelty, besides being able to give many of them points in the matter of cultivation and *chic*.

I was purposely late in arriving, and when I approached the stall a man of medium size, with reddish whiskers, was talking to Mrs.

Burton, having his back turned to me, so that I heard his last remark before he perceived my presence.

"Oh, Tilly," he was saying, in a half-contemptuous, drawling tone, "your geese are always swans; and this new one is so late in appearing that I fancy your collection of golden eggs will not be increased by her efforts. Bet you a pound to a shilling she doesn't come."

Mrs. Burton, seeing a prospect of increasing her revenue thus easily, gave me a significant look to pause a moment while she accepted the wager, and then motioned me forward, saying,—

"And I have won, for here Miss Hilliard is!—Dear Miss Hilliard, permit me to present the Duke of Beudesleigh."

The duke turned upon me a pair of pale-blue eyes whose expression made me wince internally. It was as though he were taking an appraisal of my physical advantages; and then, as the look intensified into keen satisfaction, he bowed carelessly, remarking,—

"Miss Hilliard has caught us *in flagrante delicto*, and we owe her an apology for making her coming the subject of a wager. But as our excuse we must proffer the cause of charity, which has gained by our discourtesy. However, Mrs. Burton took an unfair advantage that would scarcely be allowed in sporting circles, Miss Hilliard: she bet on a certainty."

I was a little nettled by his easy familiarity, not being as yet quite accustomed to the license of speech and manner which is accorded to the Upper House, besides which his Grace's half-insolent inspection of me had fired my American blood and had aroused resentment in my unsophisticated breast. Remember, I was young yet, and a little stiff in assuming the proper humbly-grateful attitude toward condescension: my joints have become more flexible since. There is something hateful to me in being made the subject of a bet, and in addition to these various causes which dictated my reply was a sudden and utter detestation of the man's appearance. So, as I looked him fully in the eyes, with an impertinently indifferent glance, I replied,—

"Ah! But I didn't know I was in sporting circles. I imagined that Mrs. Burton had requested me to assist at a fancy bazaar, not at a horse-fair."

Mrs. Burton looked horrified, but his *Disgrace* (as Robby Starkweather calls him on account of a laxity of moral principles in the duke, which is also apt to be endemic in the Upper House) actually brightened into unwonted vivacity and looked at me with greater interest.

"Plenty of go, egad!" I heard him mutter. Then, as I swept by him with a careless nod and took up my station behind a great fragrant bank of violets, he deliberately turned his back on Mrs. Brander-Burton and followed me.

Two or three men whom I knew had come up and claimed my attention, among them Mr. Chisholm, but as the duke approached they all drew back a little, as if acknowledging his pretensions to prior consideration. As he took up a *boutonniere* of the perfumed things and raised them to his face he tendered me a five-pound note:

"I believe that I am *au fait* in bazaar regulations, Miss Hilliard. No change if the blossoms are fastened in the coat? Am I right?"

For a moment I was perplexed. I knew that Mrs. Burton would never forgive my losing so much grist to her mill, and yet I wouldn't have touched the lapel of his coat to profit all suffering humanity. Suddenly an idea occurred to me. Smiling sweetly, I acknowledged the duke's comprehension of the important by-law, and then, turning to a very rich but very plain assistant who stood near by, I said,—

"Dear Miss Brompton, kindly minister to the duke's wants. I had forgotten that the orchids and not the violets were assigned to my care. —Mr. Chisholm, you look sadly undecorated: will you be my first customer? if so, I will select you the daintiest blossom, and you shall not have to pay for its adjustment, either."

There was a visible smile on the faces of all the men save his Grace, but I did not fancy the vicious gleam that came into his fishy eyes as he found himself balked; neither, evidently, did Mr. Chisholm, for he said, as we moved a little farther down the booth to the great mass of fragile orchids,—

"It was amusing, very. Buddy doesn't often get such a rebuff. But, dear Miss E Pluribus, was it quite wise? He has a nasty temper, they say."

I found the next day that London fairly rang with reports of my treatment of the Duke of Beudesleigh, and the accounts of it were so maltreated and exaggerated that I was totally at a loss to recognize my own action in the matter. I dropped in at two or three places to get a cup of tea in the course of the afternoon, and was overwhelmed with comment, and it was funny to hear the various views of my real and accredited conduct.

The largest gathering was at Mrs. Morrison's, an awfully popular little widow, whose hospitality was proportionate to her ample jointure. As she welcomed me with a kittenish rub of her downy olive cheek, she took both my hands in hers and actually shook me.

"You dear thing!" she cried, enthusiastically. "Do you know, I envy you to-day beyond any woman in London! But how did you dare treat the brute so?"

"How?" I asked, curious to hear her version.

"How!" she repeated, mimicking my voice. "Good friends, hear her! Look at the sweet, innocent face! 'How?' she asks, when every one knows that she tossed the rose in Buddy's face and told him to pin it in himself. Oh, *ces Ingénues!*"

"Ah, but I did no such thing," I replied, hastily, really annoyed that such outrageous indecorum should be credited to me. "If you will glance at the inner page of *Five O'Clock Tea*, you will see a tolerably correct account of what was merely an impulse on my part."

The paper was at once forthcoming, and as I made my exit I could hear Mrs. Morrison regaling her guests with "An American Pleasantry," and began to feel glad of what had been earlier in the day a serious annoyance,—that Mr. Chisholm had inserted in his journal a verbatim report of my thoughtless action.

CHAPTER IV.

I SUPPOSE that nothing that I ever did in my life added so much to my notoriety as did the incident related in the preceding chapter. Garbled versions of it were copied into the American papers, and a horrid account in the *New York Witness* was heavily underlined and forwarded to mamma, and in the same mail came a letter from Paul Sturgis. It ran as follows:

"DEAR MRS. HILLIARD,—

"I am aware that I am taking an unwarrantable liberty in calling your attention to an article which is going the rounds of the press, and which cannot fail to inspire comment and remark detrimental to you and your children. Although I have not forgotten the offence I once gave by offering, perhaps too harshly, a little well-meant advice, yet, by virtue of our long friendship and the warm interest I feel in you and Elise, I cannot refrain from begging you to consider how greatly injured Elise's prospects may be by the notoriety that is being gained by Miss Hilliard. I beg you not to show her this letter nor to mention my name in the matter, but do, *do*, my dear Mrs. Hilliard, expostulate with her upon her present course of action, and endeavor to restrain her craving for publicity. I have been moved to write thus by the unfavorable criticisms I continually hear bestowed upon Miss Hilliard, and which I cannot bear to believe the child I once admired and loved can merit. Trusting you will believe that my protest is prompted by the most kindly motives, not the least of which are my desire for your welfare and the wish to see one of my countrywomen honored and respected, as well as admired, abroad, I am, etc., etc."

Such a letter might have made me angry with any other man than Paul who had seen fit to interfere with my freedom of action and prescribe closer attention to the proprieties, but this only made me fiercely indignant with newspaper men and awoke in me a longing to justify myself in Paul's eyes by writing him a true account of the episode. But against this my pride rebelled, and I was obliged to content myself with sending him a copy of *Five O'Clock Tea* addressed in a disguised hand, and begging mamma to point out to him how scandalously exaggerated the accounts of my conduct had been.

And so my first London season passed away, amid a perfect whirl of excitement: balls, dinners, teas, excursions to Richmond, fêtes, concerts, opera, and theatre,—every moment occupied, and scarcely a pause for reflection. My success was as entire as even mamma had wished; and, despite the natural supposition that such a career might awaken feelings of envy and jealousy in less fortunate breasts, I could think of but one real enemy I had made,—and that was not among my own sex. The one person who, I felt, hated me with all the malignancy of a small and evil nature was his Grace of Budesleigh, though outwardly he was my courteous and flattering admirer. His dislike was natural, and I could not blame him that he bore me a grudge.

Lord Derrington had proposed and been refused. Indeed, his lord-

ship's offers had been many and frequent,—so frequent that I had to constitute Robby Starkweather a body-guard to defend me from Derrington's constant efforts to make me a present of himself. Other men had offered themselves to me, but in a less insistent and recurrent fashion than Derrington. My last refusal of him had had a happy result in sending him off to America in a fit of despair, and now I felt that I could accept Lady Denbigh's invitation and go down to her without fear of the persecutions of her neighbor.

Lady Denbigh had promised her daughter to reopen the long-closed doors of Denbigh Court in the autumn following Josephine's first season, and to fill the beautiful old house with guests of Lady Emily Starkweather's selecting. Lord Denbigh, whom I had not seen for several years, had returned from a prolonged tour abroad, and it was also his wish to assist his sister in placing her daughter properly before the world.

As I had expected, I found a large house-party assembled at the Court when I arrived in the early dusk of an autumn afternoon and was at once ushered into the small drawing-room, where tea was going on. Lots of people whom I knew seconded Lady Denbigh's greeting, while among the unknown there was a visible craning of necks to catch a glimpse of one of the celebrities of the season.

Half a dozen welcoming males soon stripped me of my outer garments and furnished me with a steaming cup of that potent and perfervid decoction so dear to the heart of female England. Possessed of this, and elate with the consciousness of having so well timed my arrival, I sank into the luxurious *fauteuil* drawn up for me within comfortable range of the cheery fire.

"Dear Evelyn, how awfully fit you are looking!" said Sibyl McCarty, a pretty, piquant little Irish girl of whom I had seen a good deal in London. "What have you been doing to re-establish yourself so quickly after such a season?"

"Been *en retraite* with Mrs. Brander-Burton in Sussex. If it had not been for the refreshing squabbles of those interesting youths of hers, I doubt if I should have survived the deathly dullness of that visit."

"What is Tilly Burton doing now?" Lady Denbigh asked.

"Now?" I repeated, pretending to misunderstand her emphasis and glancing at the French *pendule* on the mantel. "I cannot safely predict anything of an inmate of her establishment, but, according to my experience, she is now seated at her tea-table, and, having endeavored to swallow a nauseous compound which her charming lads have surreptitiously doctored out of all semblance to tea, she is trying to polish up some verses which she is writing for a Christmas leaflet."

"Does Mrs. Brander-Burton write?" asked a man named Dalton, who had but lately returned from India and was not yet *au courant* of men and things in England.

"Yes, a little; enough, maybe, to keep her in gloves. I wish you could have seen her turning off 'Their Evening Prayer' one afternoon. They were fighting like Apaches on the war-path at her feet, digging their little fists into one another's eyes, kicking and pummelling one

another generally, while she scribbled, with a running commentary of adjections, threats, and interjections, 'Their Evening Prayer.' She read it to me. It went this way :

'Sweetly they sleep.' (Boys, will you be quiet!) 'their golden heads Soft pillowed' (Gerald!) 'on each other's breasts.' (Tom, don't you bunt into Gerald's chest that way again!) 'My gentle lads!' (Evelyn, did you ever see such torments?) 'Whose pure young lips' (Gerald! *what* did you say, sir? Where did you learn that naughty, naughty word?)——"

I could not finish for the laughter that interrupted me, as most of those present knew my late hostess and recognized the faithfulness of the description. As I paused, a portière at the farther end of the room was pulled aside, and two gentlemen, both of whom I at first took for strangers, entered. As they approached us, however, I saw my mistake, for in the features of the elder man, bronzed though they were by travel and exposure to foreign suns, I quickly discovered the resemblance to my old friend Lord Denbigh. We had not met for three or four years, as his love of travelling, amounting almost to a hobby, had prevented my renewing my acquaintance with him during my occasional visits to Lady Emily.

Evidently he was more at a loss than I, for I saw him glance at me a moment with surprise and then scan the group perplexedly. After replying to one or two sallies from different members of it, he went directly up to his mother, who was seated a little behind me, but within easy earshot of my *fauteuil*.

"She has not come?" he said.

Lady Denbigh gave an amused little laugh.

"Do you not recognize her, then?"

"Surely——" There was a pause that spoke volumes of amazement; then they came up to me, Lady Denbigh leaning lightly on her son's arm.

"Evelyn, dear," she said, in her charming, high-bred tones, "Denbigh's eyes absolutely refuse to identify you, so it seems you must go through the ceremony of introduction. I presume your vision is not so faulty: you remember my son?"

"Indeed yes," I said, extending a cordial hand to my old friend and lifting my eyes to his grave, kind face. We chatted a little of old times and new ones, and then the man who had entered with Lord Denbigh came up with Lady Emily and was presented to me.

As I responded to Lady Emily's words of introduction and looked into the stranger's face, I felt a most peculiar sensation, quite different from anything I had ever experienced, steal over me. It was scarcely unpleasant, however, for I remember feeling no annoyance at his conversational advances, which soon monopolized my attention to the exclusion of Lord Denbigh, who, after a few vain attempts to hold his own against his guest, courteously withdrew to devote himself to a more appreciative listener.

Lady Emily had named the new-comer to me as Mr. Tresham, and I afterwards learned that his position in society was a rather anomalous

one. He was a man well born and exceedingly well connected, but a portionless younger son, with the tastes of his class and slight means of gratifying them. He possessed but one acquirement that he could turn to pecuniary advantage, and that was a keen and thorough knowledge of horses. This procured him employment and excellent remuneration in the following manner. His acquaintance was an extensive one, constantly increasing,—as is the case with *mondains* generally,—and among this acquaintance were men whose stables were in continual need of overhauling and replenishing. Of the trouble and annoyance of this Tresham relieved them, without in any way losing caste among his class, with whom, being possessed of minor accomplishments and considerable tact, he was almost universally popular.

"I consider myself especially fortunate just now in the choice of a profession, Miss Hilliard," he said, as Lord Denbigh left us, "as it is the means of my being here, and has thus afforded me a long-desired opportunity of meeting you."

"You are very, very good," I said, with that languid indifference with which I ever receive flattery. "We have common friends?" my modesty ignoring the notoriety which had made all London familiar with my name.

"One, at least," he replied. "My friend the Duke of Beudesleigh is one of your devoted admirers."

I looked at him to see if he were jesting, but his face gave no evidence of it.

"Scarcely that," I returned, with intention, as the French say.

"Ah! You think the duke harbors resentment for your clever little ruse at the bazaar? But you are immensely mistaken, Miss Hilliard, I assure you. Beudesleigh was awfully amused by your quickness. He thinks you no end charming. 'Pon my word he does!'"

"Well, I regret to say I cannot pay his Grace a like compliment. But pardon me, he is a friend of yours, and so should be sacred from my comments; besides, I am too awfully done up to express myself good-naturedly upon any subject, and, if you will excuse me, I will ask Lady Denbigh to let some one ring for my maid to take my wraps to my room. Perhaps I shall be more amiable after I rest a bit. I shall have a little time before the dressing-bell rings?"

He replied in the affirmative, and insisted upon seeing to the safe conveyance of my wraps.

When, a few moments before dinner was announced, I sauntered slowly and admiringly down the broad staircase and through the charming old hall on my way to the large drawing-room where Fifi had told me the guests usually assembled, I felt, as ever, fairly well satisfied with the reflection the huge cheval-glass in my dressing-room had given back to me in response to the parting glance I bestowed upon it. I *was* beautiful as a picture, and I knew it; so was I in charity with all men. As the silk lining of my gown swish-swished softly over the polished floor, with that suggestion of richness of material so satisfying to the feminine soul, a figure which had been concealed from me by a suit of armor rose from a chair, and I discovered Lord Denbigh. He at once came forward.

"I have been waiting for you to come down," he said, with a little flush on his good, kindly face. "I don't feel half satisfied with our meeting this afternoon before all those people, and want you to allow me to try and discover one single trace of the child I used to know. It is some time yet before dinner: why should we not sit down here and try to renew our old friendship?"

Of course I yielded to his request, and seated myself in the chair he had already drawn up near his own before the huge oak fireplace.

I gazed pensively a few seconds into the fire, too delicately unselfish to interrupt the silent pleasure which I knew my companion was deriving from his inspection of me. I had had my turn, above in my chamber, and could feel for Lord Denbigh. Suddenly, however, his courtesy reasserted itself. He drew a long breath.

"I am unpardonably rude, Miss Hilliard," he said, "but you are a profound mystery to me: I cannot discover a single trace."

"Of what?—the lost tribes?" a voice interrupted him. We both turned, and discovered Tresham standing looking at us with a somewhat amused smile. Lord Denbigh frowned slightly.

"No," he returned; "of—well, of a lost child, Tresham, in whom I was once interested." He smiled at me with the charming smile I had formerly loved, and Tresham looked baffled. Just then the gong sounded, and we hastened to join the others in the stately drawing-room.

I was sent in to dinner with a man who was a stranger to me when dinner began, but with whom before the elaborate meal was half concluded I felt that I had been on terms of intimacy for years. He was the Honorable Carteret Horsford, familiarly known as Carty, and termed by his friends, he told me, the Honorable Exception, being the only case on record of the absolute propriety of putting the cart before the horse.

This excellent specimen was a sample of his *jeux d'esprit*, but he was a dear, jolly little fellow, round and rosy as an apple, overflowing with *chronique scandaleuse*, and with an appetite for gossip as keen as that of a woman. He knew the past and present of every member of the assembled party, and was not indisposed to part with his knowledge: so that I soon found myself thoroughly informed by him regarding my co-guests.

A singular, foreign-looking girl, whom I had never seen before, attracted my notice by reason of the exceedingly beautiful quality of the jewels she wore. I diverted the stream of my neighbor's eloquence upon her.

"That?" he exclaimed, looking at me in open-eyed astonishment. "Why, that's Yvonne d'Alembert!"

"And who is Yvonne d'Alembert?" with a vague recollection, however, of having heard the name somewhere before.

"Why, Miss Hilliard, I thought you were an old friend of the Denbighs!"

"So I am."

"And never have heard of Yvonne d'Alembert! Well, that's no end queer, you know."

"Why so?"

"Because Yvonne, if she fulfils our expectations, will one day be Lady Denbigh and mistress of these ancestral halls."

"She is Lord Denbigh's *fiancée*?" My surprise was genuine.

The Honorable Exception shook his curly head.

"Not ex—actly," he replied. "She is on probation before taking the white veil, as it were."

"Tell me about it," I demanded.

He finished the *entrée* which he had been devouring with evident relish, and then proceeded to obey my behest.

"It's quite a tale," he said. "But, as I always give the salad course the go-by, I can give my undivided attention to the story of the Earl and the Exile's daughter. Good title, eh? Well, to begin. The late Lord Denbigh was a far different man from the present incumbent, and, with taste that did credit to his judgment, vastly preferred the vine-clad slopes of sunny France to his own bleak and barren land. Like my style, Miss Hilliard? I'm a little mashed on it myself. Pretty figure,—vine-clad slopes of sunny France?"

"Charming," I nodded.

"This nobleman, with great wisdom, spent much of his time—to say nothing of his cash—in the gay and sportive circles of Parisian society, and formed many attachments there. Do not blush, I beg of you, Miss Hilliard: you misunderstand my meaning. The old earl's attachments were strictly legitimate,—at least those of which I speak,—being confined to his own sex. The man with whom he was most closely *lié* was a Monsieur d'Alembert, an enormously rich *financier* who had married one of the Empress's ladies-in-waiting. D'Alembert had been shrewd enough to divine the precarious nature of the hold the late lamented Louis had upon his tottering throne, and when the downfall came, Monsieur d'Alembert was *non est*: unlike his friend Denbigh, he had found the bleak and barren shores of stern Britannia more to his fancy than the vine-clad slopes of sunny France. Here, at Denbigh Court, he had ensconced himself and his *petite ange* Yvonne,—the lady-in-waiting having died some time previously,—while in English securities reposed safely the endangered francs and louis which had received hospitable welcome in an alien land. Need I say that the soul of D'Alembert clung to Britannia? Was not his conduct under the circumstances amply supported by excellent authority? For are we not indisputably assured that where the treasure is, there will the heart be also? And there was so much treasure in this case! After a few months, however, the grim destroyer fell upon D'Alembert and plucked him from his adopted home. Yvonne was left alone. Alone, yet not alone! For surely it would be doing foul injustice to humanity at large to assume such a condition possible in the case of a girl possessed of her bank account."

"Was Lord Denbigh left her guardian?" I asked.

"Not he. The worthy *financier* had destined him to become 'a nearer one yet and a dearer one still' to his daughter. She was to be sent back to France and educated in some convent in Brittany, her guardians being former friends and fellow-countrymen of her father.

It was desired that she should wed Lord Denbigh's son, the present earl, if the latter might be so inclined,—the girl, following the French fashion, having no voice in the matter."

"Does she live in France now?" I asked.

"Yes, but comes over generally for the season. This year she was too ill to come, which accounts for your not having met her."

"You say they are not engaged?"

"No; his lordship funks the matrimonial fence. I don't know what his ultimate intentions may be, but the fair Yvonne is growing old apace, and it's a little hard on her, with all her shekels."

"How beautiful her jewels are!" I remarked, a trifle enviously.

"Those! Why, those are mere bagatelles! She *has* a collection left her by her father, who had a mania for such things. It is famous."

His story had consumed some time, for there had been occasional interruptions which I have not set down, and now there was a general movement on the part of the women indicating departure from the dining-room. I rose and gathered my *et-ceteras* together, and as I passed out I found myself side by side with Yvonne d'Alembert. As I drew back to give way to her, she turned and addressed me, with a smile that quite transfigured her usually rather plain features.

"Pardon me," she said, "but this is Miss Hilliard, is it not?"

I acknowledged my identity in French. She looked delighted.

"And I am Yvonne d'Alembert," she went on. "You do not mind my speaking to you without an introduction, I am sure, Miss Hilliard; and you are also good enough to sacrifice your vernacular to mine. That is truly kind of you, for I own I do infinitely prefer my own language to yours, and never feel quite so well at ease when I am speaking in English."

"And I, too, prefer your tongue, greatly," I returned, smiling at her warmth. She was evidently an impulsive little thing, not very conventional, and probably, it seemed to me, as fickle and volatile as she was quick-hearted and enthusiastic.

We had reached the drawing-room now, and she led me to a lovely Louis Quinze *tête-à-tête*, where, she said, we could have a cosy chat and get acquainted with each other, for she felt that we were destined to become friends. She inaugurated our new relationship with great volubility, and I found her apparent frivolity and ingenuousness quite amusing, though I had a feeling that beneath her flippant exterior there lurked qualities far different from those she chose to display to the world. She did not ring quite true to my ears.

CHAPTER V.

BESIDES those whom I have mentioned in the foregoing chapter, there were staying at Denbigh Court Sir Hubert and Lady Leeds, an elderly couple, intimate and valued friends of Lady Denbigh, merely incidental figures in my story, however; also Harcourt Henderson, an old beau of the most would-be-gallant and tiresome type.

In addition to these were a charming couple, Mr. and Mrs. Reggie

Dering,—she a blonde beauty, awfully swagger in style and manner, yet eminently agreeable and captivating, he also agreeable, if a little too devoted to his after-dinner glass of claret. She was quite too funny with him when this devotion somewhat exceeded bounds, as it was rather apt to do, and with infinite tact would turn into an amusing episode what might often have been an exceedingly embarrassing occasion. She and the Honorable Carty were *aux petits soins*, and a more ridiculous and laughable affair than theirs never existed. Robby Starkweather was to come down the day after my arrival and thus complete the party.

There was to be a meet of the —shire hounds the following morning, and Mrs. Reggie, as she was popularly called, Sibyl McCarty, and I decided to ride over with the men and see the pack throw off. Mrs. Reggie was a daring and enthusiastic horsewoman, and I, too, was fond of the exercise, though my equestrianism had been rather limited in range, confined principally to a mild canter in the Bois or the Row. I had a good seat, and was fearless, but comparatively inexperienced.

As we stood on the gravel sweep preparatory to mounting, Mrs. Reggie turned to me:

"This air is like wine, Miss Hilliard; it's getting into my brain, I think. Wouldn't you like to follow?"

"To follow?" I repeated. "Not I. I should not be in it at all. I might start, you know, but it would be disaster that followed."

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Tresham, coming forward a little eagerly. "Do try it, Miss Hilliard. I'm sure you will be all right; I'll see to it that you are. Miss Starkweather says you have a first-rate seat, and lots of the women down in this part of the world ride to hounds, you know."

"Possibly," I returned, somewhat coolly, for there had been from the first a little air of mastership in his manner of addressing me which I resented. "But I shall not. I have no desire to make a spectacle of myself."

"Well, we'll see when we get to the farm. I think you will follow." And, provoked as I was at his insistence, and determined as I was *not* to follow, there was a feeling in my heart that I should prove the truth of his prediction.

A peculiar influence seemed to emanate from this man, to which I felt that I might some time succumb to my detriment. I am not given to fancies or superstitious sensations, but from the moment I had first spoken to Tresham I had felt ill at ease with him.

I summoned Lord Denbigh to my side as we rode off, and engaged him in conversation, thus allowing Tresham no opportunity to join me. Directly behind us rode Mrs. Reggie and Carty Horsford, whose sentimental relations provoked the unbounded amusement of their friends, so absolutely absurd were they. I managed to direct the conversation incidentally upon Tresham, and drew from Lord Denbigh that account of Tresham's manner of earning his living which I have elsewhere related.

"He is now putting my stables in order," Lord Denbigh concluded. "I have quite neglected them during my many and prolonged absences, and now, as I have decided to settle down for a time at least, I wish them properly stocked."

"I have an awfully queer feeling about him, Lord Denbigh," I said. "He strikes terror to my breast." I laughed, but there was earnestness beneath the laughter. Something had impelled me to say this much of the strange distrust I felt of the man, to my old friend.

He turned a surprised face toward me.

"Why, Miss Hilliard?" he said; "I thought you were in a fair way to become fast friends."

"Not I," I replied. "Mr. Tresham seems inclined to favor me with a good deal of his attention, but——" I paused. "Lord Denbigh, you will think me awfully foolish, but that man will some day do me an injury."

When we reached the spot at which the hounds were to throw off we found quite a crowd assembled, among them a multitude of people I knew, and our little party was immediately the centre of a considerable group. In reply to many inquiries I asserted positively that I had merely come to see the start and had no intention of following. Yet, when the huntsman rode up followed by his pack of sleek and glossy-coated hounds, I turned involuntarily toward Tresham.

He was standing beside his horse at a little distance,—a picture of a perfectly-turned-out hunting man. His eyes were on me, although he turned away at once when I looked at him. There was a little flutter of preparation among the men and a few of the women. Lord Denbigh came up and raised his hat.

"We shall be off in a minute," he said. "Good-by! Carty will take you ladies home."

Just then Tresham rode up and jumped from his mount. Throwing the bridle over his arm, he approached my mare, and, stooping, felt of her girths.

"What are you doing, Mr. Tresham?" I demanded, haughtily.

"What's the matter, Tresham?" asked Lord Denbigh at the same moment.

"Nothing," he replied, coolly: "I thought Miss Hilliard's girths looked a little loose; that's all."

"And are they?"

"No; all right."

Some one called Lord Denbigh, and he rode off, after another farewell. A sudden fear of being left alone with Tresham came over me, and I nearly called to Lord Denbigh to come back, but restrained myself in time. What was the matter with me? I turned with assumed nonchalance to Tresham: he was looking at me with a peculiarly intent gaze.

"You will follow?" he rather asserted than questioned.

I felt a paralyzing sensation creeping over me, crippling my will. I clinched my teeth and answered through them,—

"I will not."

I had scarcely uttered the words when I heard a cry "Hark away!" There was a hurried, confused movement in the crowd: my will seemed suddenly to relax, my intentions to become null and void. Whether I impelled her or no, I cannot tell; I was simply conscious that the mare had bounded forward, and, before I was aware of what

had happened, I was in hot pursuit of the pack, which was already an indistinct mass of flying brown and white bodies in the distant perspective.

The first definite sensation I can recall was anger, and yet I seemed to have lost the inclination to check the mad career of my mare. I sat like a statue, feeling the ground fly from under her feet; not exactly frightened, but raging internally at the position in which I found myself. Apparently I was alone, for the field were all ahead of me, even Tresham being with the others.

I heard a shout behind, but, having my hands full with the mare, could not turn to look. The voice came nearer, and then I distinguished Mrs. Reggie's tones and her broken reproaches:

"Oh, Miss Hilliard!—How quite too—awfully mean of you!—When you said—you wouldn't. But I'll be even with—you. I mean to be in—at the death."

I had thought that my mare was making about as good time as a creature possessed of legs and not wings possibly could, but in another moment Mrs. Reggie, hotly pursued by Carty Horsford, flashed past me. This gave my mare fresh impetus; she quickened her pace and fled onward, while I sat rigid and helpless, feeling that I, too, like Mrs. Reggie, should be "in at the death;" though, unlike Mrs. Reggie, it was my own death and not the fox's I anticipated being "in" at.

The only actual knowledge I have of what followed is this. I saw, in the distance, Mrs. Reggie and Carty suddenly rise in the air; I realized that bars were imminent; I knew not what to do with bars when I should encounter them; I tried to formulate some plan, but the blood was singing in my ears. My mare was going for all she was worth, and so was I—going for all I was worth, straight over her head and into a ditch upon the other side of the bars. I heard the hoofs of my mare as she galloped on riderless, and I felt no desire to rise, so excellent seemed the cessation of motion.

After a few moments, however, I managed to pick myself up and seat my bruised body upon a stone by the wayside; then I placed my aching head in my trembling hands and tried to recall what had started me on my mad career. It was useless; I had absolutely no idea. I only felt an unreasoning conviction that in some way Tresham was to blame for it, although he had moved away before I started, and even now might be ignorant that I had joined the hunt.

I was sitting thus, pondering upon the affair and wondering how I was to get home, when I heard the sound of hoofs, and, raising my weary head, discovered Carteret Horsford returning at full gallop.

"Oh! There you are, Miss Hilliard!" he cried, in evident relief. "Hurt any?" He threw himself from his horse and came hurriedly up to me.

"Not at all," I replied, "except in my pride."

"What in the name of all that's marvellous possessed you to follow, Miss Hilliard? Mrs. Reggie was so surprised."

"Not half as much so as I, I'll venture," I replied.

"Mare get away with you?"

"I fancy so," I said, wearily, for I felt really very much shaken.

"You're quite done up, aren't you? It's a beastly shame. That brute must have been an old hunter and scented the battle from afar. Miss Hilliard, what shall I do? I don't know where your mare may be by this. She passed us at full gallop, heading for Baybury's farm; otherwise I should never have known what had happened. Would it be an awful bore for you to sit here, don't you know, till I could ride to the Court and have them send for you? It wouldn't be so long, for my horse is quite fresh, and I can go 'cross country. I know every inch of these parts, you know."

I gladly assented to his proposition, for I was only too pleased to be allowed to sit quite still and regain my equipoise before being subjected to further movement. He made me as comfortable as was possible under the circumstances, and was very kind and solicitous, but I was cordially glad to see him throw himself over his horse's back and ride off, leaving me to "the bliss of solitude."

He had been gone but a few moments when I again heard the sound of a horse's feet, and, being sufficiently restored to my normal self to feel that a condition of dejection was unbecoming, I arose and withdrew into some shrubs that lined the hedgerow. Thus partially concealed, I could behold the approaching rider without being myself seen by a casual observer. What was my surprise to discover Tresham riding slowly along apparently engaged in the curious operation of searching the road for some missing object! Aware that my shelter was not sufficient to hide me from his exploring gaze, and feeling all my ire rise against this man, absurd and irrational as I knew my mental attitude toward him to be, I stepped suddenly forward and confronted him.

He started, and a very singular expression crossed his face as he saw me standing thus unexpectedly before him. Had it not been a ridiculous and groundless assumption, I should have said he was distinctly disappointed at seeing me. However, his face changed at once as he threw himself from his horse.

"Oh, Miss Hilliard!" he cried, with what sounded like genuine solicitude in his voice. "My God! what a relief! I have been conjuring up all sorts of horrors about you." He scanned me closely, and would have taken my hand but that I held it engaged with my hunting-crop. "You are not even scratched?"

"Not even scratched," I replied, coldly. "How did you know I had been thrown, Mr. Tresham? Do the others know of it?"

"No, I think not. My horse cast a shoe, and I had to give up the run. I stopped at the smithy this side of Baybury's farm to have the mischief repaired, when up came your mare, riderless and covered with foam. We caught her, and I have sent men in different directions to search for you, I coming back over the course we had taken, being tolerably certain of finding you somewhere on the route."

"You expected to find me injured,—dead, perhaps?"

I do not know what prompted me to ask the question in such a tone. All my conduct toward him seemed dictated by occult motives. He looked rather surprised at the emphasis which gave point to my remark, and returned, gravely,—

"I feared to find you injured; I rejoice to find you unscathed."

His voice shook a little, as with deep feeling, and his eyes softened almost to tenderness as they gazed into mine. For a moment I felt how foolish had been my suspicions of him, and I was about to extend my hand in gratitude for his emotion, when I paused, restrained by a recollection. Was he to blame for my present predicament? Now was my time to find out. I would be frank with him.

"Mr. Tresham," I said, looking him boldly in the face, "had you anything to do with my involuntarily taking part in this charming sport?"

"I, Miss Hilliard?" There was unbounded amazement in his tone.

"Yes, you," I returned, determined not to be baffled.

"What a singular idea! I did not even see you start. If you remember, I had just ridden forward to join Lord Denbigh when the field started. What did you think me guilty of? Giving a cut to your mare? Even for the pleasure of having you with us I should scarcely have been likely to commit such an indiscretion before so large an assemblage."

The wounded dignity in his voice quite shamed me and rather melted me toward him; yet I was bound to sift my singular impressions to the bottom. I laughed, as if amused at the absurdity of his suggestion.

"Scarcely that," I said, more good-humoredly. "But you persisted so in your assertion that I should join the hunt, even when I told you that I had not the remotest intention of doing so. Why was it?"

"If you can answer that question, Miss Hilliard, you will be doing me actual service. I am a queer fellow, subject to strange impressions which are absolutely unaccountable to me. When we left the Court this morning I was thoroughly convinced that you would follow the hounds. Did you not see me feel of your girths before we started?"

"Yes," I admitted.

"You see, I took what precautions I could lest evil should befall you. I did not stay with you because I felt my presence unwelcome, and I was quite easy about you, for I knew that Constance Dering never would see you start without her."

His explanation was so simple and frank that I felt I had made a fool of myself. I knew that some persons are subject to curious experiences and possess singular powers. I felt that I had done the man great injustice, and, as he exerted himself to his utmost to beguile the interval of waiting, by the time the brougham arrived my estimate of him had undergone quite a revulsion and I was prepared to maintain, against any number of hostile opinions, that he was one of the most charming, interesting men I had ever known.

Lady Emily had insisted upon coming to fetch me herself, asseverating that nothing but ocular evidence should convince her of my absolute immunity from injury. I was naturally very jarred, and bruised enough to secure to myself for a day or two the enjoyable privileges of an invalid.

Altogether I put in rather a good time, except for my bruises, being petted and made much of to my heart's content. I was looked upon

as the heroine of a miraculous escape, and the whole household, from Julie, my maid, to Lord Denbigh himself, went, metaphorically, upon their knees in gratitude for my preservation.

The third day found me quite able to cast aside my invalid habits and join the others, excepting that being still a little sore and lame I had decided not to venture out. There was a function of some sort going on at Shelby Grange that afternoon which necessitated a drive of some four or five miles for Lady Denbigh's guests. I begged off, and Yvonne—who had attached herself to me like a purring kitten—insisted upon staying at home to bear me company. Sir Hubert Leeds and Mr. Tresham also remained behind,—the former because his soul loathed society functions, and the latter on account of an appointment he had with some stud-groom who had valuable information to impart concerning the sale of his master's stable. At the last moment Lady Emily, who had been suffering all day with neuralgic pains in her head, succumbed to the enemy and decided to join the minority.

The hours dragged rather wearily after the departure of the others, and though Lady Emily, Yvonne, and I tried our prettiest to entertain each other, I think we were all more or less bored. I am sure I was, and, being rather spoiled, perhaps I showed it. At all events, Lady Emily must have divined it, or perhaps the twinges of her enemy awoke in her a craving for solitude, for suddenly she broke a somewhat lengthy pause by saying,—

"Yvonne, why don't you amuse Evelyn by showing her your collection of jewels? She loves pretty things, and I am sure it would entertain her immensely."

I do love pretty things,—witness my *amour-propre*,—and seized upon the idea with avidity.

"Oh, will you, Yvonne?"—for it was Yvonne and Evelyn between us already.

"Certainly, if you wish.—But, dear madame, it will not seem vulgar, like a display, you know?"

"Nonsense! not at all," Lady Emily responded, and "Absurd!" I cried.

"*Bien! Allons!*" and she rose, and with one of her foreign gestures held out her olive palm for my whiter one. We were bidding *au revoir* to Lady Emily and leaving the room, when Tresham entered.

"Where are you going, my pretty maids?" he quoted, with visible disappointment on his dark face; and then, before we had time to reply, he continued, brightening a little, "May I go with you, my pretty maids?"

We shook our heads.

"Not? and if not, why not?"

"It is quite too awfully bad," I said, laughing, for we were excellent friends now, "but Miss d'Alembert is going to show me her jewels. By-by."

We passed on, and left him turning irresolutely toward the billiard-room. As we went up the broad staircase together and down the great empty corridors leading to her apartments, I said to Yvonne,—

"Don't you feel afraid to carry luggage as valuable as your jewel-casket must be, about with you?"

She laughed and shook her head.

"I don't have a jewel-casket," she replied. "I carry them in one of my boxes."

"In a trunk!" I cried, in surprise. "Why, Yvonne, how awfully dangerous!"

"No; I think not," she returned. "Wait till you see." We entered her dressing-room, and she rang for her maid. "I cannot lift out the trays myself," she said. "Estelle must come."

"Is she trustworthy?" I asked.

"My father thought so," she replied, conclusively. "She has been with me almost since my birth. Now make yourself comfortable. That's the box."

She drew up a large chintz-covered arm-chair and gave me a little push toward it, at the same time nodding in the direction of a large trunk that stood in a corner,—an ordinary-looking, inconspicuous object which gave little suggestion of the treasure it contained.

Just then a small, dark-haired, olive-skinned woman of some fifty-odd years presented herself in answer to her mistress's summons. She was unmistakably French, and had the appearance of a shrewd, honest native of one of the provinces. Yvonne treated her with more familiarity than we usually accord our inferiors; but such long and faithful service merited it.

"Estelle, bring out the box, yonder," she directed. "I am going to show Miss Hilliard my jewels."

The woman did not look over-pleased.

"Mademoiselle will caution Miss Hilliard not to say where the jewels are kept?" she took the liberty of suggesting.

"Yes, yes," her mistress returned, impatiently.—"Estelle thinks me frightfully imprudent, Evelyn."

I said a few words in commendation of the maid's caution, for indeed it did seem to me then a fearful piece of recklessness to keep such a treasure in a mere trunk in one's chamber. Estelle placed her vigorous hands upon the box and pulled it forward to our feet; then, without even unlocking the lid,—which ever remained unfastened unless Yvonne was *en route*,—she lifted it up and displayed a number of empty trays.

The box was one of those made solely for the purpose of holding dresses, and was filled with about half a dozen trays, long, with straps across, in which gowns could be laid without much folding. One after the other of these Estelle lifted out, each being lined with a soft violet silken sachet, which gave out the delicate fragrance of orris as it reached the air. As the last one was deposited on the floor I leaned forward and uttered a cry. There, cold, naked, and barren, without even the dainty perfumed lining of violet satin, lay the bottom of the box, without sign or token of gem, jewel, or trinket.

"Yvonne," I cried, turning a startled, horrified face to her, "you have been robbed! Your jewels are not there?"

She smiled, and, despite the evidence of my eyes, I was reassured.

"Would you swear it before a magistrate?" she asked, while even the stolid face of the maid relaxed with grim satisfaction at my emphatic reply :

"Certainly."

"Wait a bit. Go on, Estelle."

The woman deftly lifted the cotton covering of the bottom of the box, which was so perfectly arranged that no living mortal could have detected its looseness. This she removed and laid on the floor beside her. Even then nothing appeared save an apparently simple wooden bottom. But now, inserting a pin or some other small, delicate instrument, she quickly and easily lifted the partition and disclosed a long, thin case made of chamois-skin, fitting exactly into the space beneath. This she took out carefully and passed to her mistress, who in turn handed it to me. It proved on examination to be made of two or three thicknesses of the soft, yellow skin stitched off into little partitions, and excellently adapted for holding and preserving such articles as it contained.

And what were these articles? I cannot begin to enumerate them. I never before had seen such a wealth of treasure in any one woman's possession. Rings, brooches, pins, tiaras, bracelets, ornaments of all kinds and descriptions, modern and antique, encrusted with gems of every size and variety, lay in a glittering sparkling mass upon the table before me as, by degrees, I extracted them from their flexible cases and placed them there.

My greedy eyes feasted covetously upon them ; for, as Lady Emily had remarked, I do dearly love pretty things, and few women, surely few beautiful women, could have beheld these magnificent trinkets without longing to possess them. I turned to Yvonne, who was watching me with amusement.

"Oh, you lucky girl!" I cried.

"They are pretty trifles, are they not?" she said, taking up a glittering star and examining it scrutinizingly.—"Estelle, this star should have been left with the others : it is very dull." Then, to me, "You cannot see the most valuable part of my collection, my diamond sun and *rivière*. Estelle fancied they needed cleaning, and insisted upon my leaving them in town for that purpose. Between you and me, Evelyn, I think she wanted me not to bring them down into the country : she is terribly afraid of their being stolen."

"I cannot blame her," I replied. "I should be frightened to death to have the responsibility of such jewels. What do you suppose them to be worth, Yvonne?"

"These? Oh, only about fifteen thousand pounds. The value of my sun and *rivière* equals this whole lot : they are the gems of the collection. The stones are absolutely pure, and the *rivière* was my father's hobby. He spent much of his time in matching the stones. I almost never wear them : they are far too gorgeous for an unmarried woman."

"I think I should not close my eyes if I felt that these were in my dressing-room. Even with such a cleverly-contrived hiding-place I should be alarmed."

"I feel my very lack of precaution their best safeguard. No one

would dream that I would leave them so unguarded; and you and Lord Denbigh alone of all the inmates of this house—excepting, of course, Estelle and myself—know where they are kept. Even Lady Denbigh has no idea where their hiding-place is. She will not let me tell her, as she says old women are naturally garrulous and she might happen to allude to it inadvertently.”

“Dear me! you make me quite nervous!” I exclaimed. “What if I should chance to betray you?”

“I’ll trust you, my dear,” she said.

We spent certainly an hour, I should think, examining the beautiful objects; and as we went down to tea together, after I had gazed my fill at the gorgeous collection, I remarked lightly to Yvonne,—

“Your woman has made me quite nervous by her evident distrust. Do I look like a thief, Yvonne?”

The girl laughed.

“You do,” she said; “truly you do,—of hearts. But you must not mind poor Estelle, dear: her life is heavily burdened by the responsibility of me and my jewels. At least, she chooses to think so.”

“You had to ring for her, Yvonne: I should think you would have her sit in your dressing-room all the time, when she is not at her meals.”

“The very way to arouse suspicion,” she replied. “*Au contraire*, I have forbidden her being there any more than her duties require.”

Lady Emily, Yvonne, Mr. Tresham, and I formed a cosy *partie carrée* at tea, the others not being expected back until dinner. Yvonne presided at the tea-table, and our conversation naturally fell upon our late employment, Tresham being much entertained by my enthusiastic description. Lady Emily lifted her eyebrows, a little rebukingly, when Yvonne announced that she had disclosed to me the hiding-place of her treasures.

“Imprudent! imprudent!” she said, admonishingly. “Not that I doubt dear Evelyn’s honesty,”—she laughed, and patted me fondly on the hand,—“but girls’ tongues are treacherous things, and Evelyn’s might betray her unintentionally. Best keep such important secrets secret, Yvonne dear.”

“Oh, dear Lady Emily! don’t fear inadvertence on my part,” I returned, gayly. “Yvonne’s Cerberus has inspired me with such fear that indiscretion would be impossible.”

Tresham probably had had enough of the subject, which certainly would not prove as interesting to men as to women, for he rose as I finished speaking, and wandered to the piano, where, seating himself, he sang to us in a delightful, desultory sort of fashion dainty ballads and tender little romanzas until the dressing-gong summoned us to more prosaic things.

CHAPTER VI.

EVERY one who has at any period of his life formed one of a country house-party knows that there are apt to be times and occasions when the tide of amusement is at the ebb, when the cloud of dullness threatens to settle upon the spirits, and when even the resources

of gossip and flirtation have become bores. Such a terrible period threatened to afflict Denbigh Court a few days later.

We had been charmingly amused and entertained up to that time, mutually pleased with each other and our surroundings. The weather had been beautiful, and our pleasures had been diversified; but two days' rain sufficed to cloud the sunshine of our content as effectually as it effaced the material luminary. Lady Denbigh had promised us a ball for the coming week, and that subject we had actually torn to tatters. We missed our host, Lord Denbigh having been called to town on important business, and but one person maintained his even spirits, and he, good-naturedly, did everything that lay in his power to reanimate ours. This was Tresham.

His work in adjusting Lord Denbigh's stables was completed, and he was on the verge of leaving, not only Denbigh Court, but England as well. Business connected with his profession called him to America, he said, and he laughingly offered to charge himself with any home commissions I might favor him with. He was only awaiting Lord Denbigh's return to take his departure.

We were all assembled in the large drawing-room after dinner, on the evening on which our host was expected home. The men had lingered as long in the dining-room as they dared, dreading probably to return to the dull atmosphere of the less informal apartment. I do not know if they would have come in until bedtime if it had not been for Robby, who was acting host in his uncle's absence, and who—being frightfully *épris* of Sibyl McCarty—was naturally anxious to return to the sunshine of her presence.

We tried a little music, but we had had a surfeit of it in the last two days, and an original arrangement of "It is not always May," that Mrs. Reggie favored us with, nearly brought tears to our eyes, so realistically had the fact been brought home to us of late.

"Miserable song! Terribly ill-timed!" grumbled Henderson in my ear. "Idea of dwelling on the fact! Am surprised at Mrs. Reggie."

She must have been conscious that she was augmenting the general depression, for after this well-meant but abortive attempt to cheer us she rose a little nervously from the piano, murmuring something about the fog getting into her throat. We were all on the verge of tears, and we feared giving way to our emotion. Tresham threw himself into the breach and came to our rescue.

"Why not have a try at hypnotism?" he suggested.

We clutched at his proposition like the proverbial drowning man, but in a moment the straw snapped between our fingers, as we each disclaimed not only any ability in the science, but even the faintest knowledge of its first principles. Again Tresham came to the front.

"I've tried it a good many times," he said, "with pretty fair success. Let me choose a subject from among you, and I fancy I can afford you some amusement."

We assented only too gladly, and his first selection was Harcourt Henderson. The old fellow fell an easy victim to Tresham's mysterious power. With a few passes and probably a profound concentration

of will, Tresham induced in his subject a deep magnetic sleep, and then entertained us by using him as the mere puppet of his whims.

He put him through a series of antics and gyrations which, in his normal state, we all felt the old beau would have died sooner than perform, and as, unlike most hypnotizers, Tresham did not verbally address his subject, Mr. Henderson's ridiculous performance seemed to us quite spontaneous and therefore the more laughable. One by one the members of the party subjected themselves to Tresham's experiments. Most of them yielded rather easily, but one or two, Yvonne d'Alembert and Major Dalton, I remember especially, proved obstinate and impossible subjects.

At last came my turn. Tresham turned to me a little doubtfully: "You will not care to try it, I fancy, Miss Hilliard?"

A chorus of exclamations arose. I did not feel in the least inclined to try the experiment, but as the others had so willingly assented it would have seemed singular and selfish in me to refuse. I therefore consented, though I have since wondered that anything should have induced me to yield myself into the power of a man whom I had so short a time before regarded with distrust and dislike.

He seemed pleased at my willingness, and placed a chair where he desired me to sit. I ensconced myself in it, and he took up a position immediately opposite, with his back supported by the chimney-piece.

"Please look at me," he said; and I turned my gaze full upon his dark, intense eyes, whose steady, controlling glance was the last thing of which I was conscious.

Afterwards I learned from Sibyl that this was what occurred. She said that Tresham had not fixed his eyes upon me for more than three minutes when my consciousness apparently wholly deserted me. My eyes assumed a vacant stare, and I evidently completely yielded up my will to Tresham's. I was as flexible to his purpose as if I had been a bit of rubber between his fingers. Silently he made his suggestions, which I automatically fulfilled. He bade me do this, and I did it, that, and I did it, performing my little share in the comedy for the edification of my audience, as had the others.

Of a sudden, Sibyl said, I paused for a moment in the middle of the apartment; then, with slow, deliberate purpose, I made for the door, and, quietly opening it, passed out, closing it gently behind me. Robby Starkweather burst into a loud laugh, while the rest looked at each other and at Tresham in bewilderment.

"Ha! ha! ha! Given you the slip, Tresham! Well done, Evelyn: you are a born *comédienne*!" This was Robby's remark.

Sibyl said she was utterly perplexed, and turned to ask Robby what he meant.

"Why, simply that she has never been under Tresham's influence at all, but has been acting it all out as a sell on us."

Every one broke into a lively chatter, discussing my conduct and Robby's interpretation of it, coming to no unanimous decision until it occurred to Reginald Dering to question Tresham.

"How is it, Tresham?" he asked. "Did Miss Hilliard get a rise out of you?"

Tresham appeared quite easy and unconcerned. "Wait and see," he replied, coolly.

Lady Denbigh looked rather dismayed. "Do you mean to imply, Mr. Tresham, that Miss Hilliard went out of this room under your influence?" she asked.

Tresham answered in the affirmative.

Lady Denbigh rose from her seat in a little flutter of excitement and annoyance. "Then I must beg some one to go and fetch her back at once. It is most unsafe for her to go wandering about the house in that helpless condition.—Yvonne, you go, if you please, my dear."

There arose a medley of voices mingling in respectful remonstrance and entreaty, to which Lady Denbigh was obliged to succumb, being earnestly assured by Tresham that it was absolutely impossible for me to come to any harm.

"What have you willed her to do?" asked Mrs. Reggie, curiously.

"It would break the spell if I told you," replied Tresham, smiling evasively.

"Will you tell us when she comes back?"

"Certainly."

"Won't she be conscious of what she has been about?" Sibyl inquired.

"You may question her if you like: I should say not, however."

"It is a most dangerous power," Lady Denbigh remarked. "I do not like it, myself."

Sibyl said that Tresham seemed a little hurt by Lady Denbigh's words.

"Surely you do not think I would make an evil use of it, my dear Lady Denbigh?" he remarked, somewhat stiffly.

"Not at all! Not at all!" Lady Denbigh hastened to say, reassuringly. "I never, for an instant, meant to imply such a thing. But if the power be given to you, why not to others less scrupulous?"

Her words gave the cue for a round of stories regarding the base purposes which hypnotism had already served, and these helped to beguile the time of waiting, and so hindered the party from remarking how lengthy an absence mine was becoming. Suddenly steps were heard in the hall without.

"She is coming!" some one cried.

"No: the step is too heavy for a woman's," remarked Major Dalton.

"Oh! it's Lord Denbigh!" said Sibyl, as the door opened and the master of the house appeared.

The usual greetings were exchanged, and then Lord Denbigh looked searchingly about the room, as if missing some one.

"Miss Hilliard?" he finally questioned. "She is not ill?"

They explained to him the cause of my absence, and a cloud crossed his face.

"I don't like such nonsense," he ejaculated abruptly. "I shall send for Miss Hilliard at once."

Tresham started forward somewhat eagerly. He had been standing a little apart from the others, who had grouped themselves about their

host upon his entrance, and had appeared—as was natural under the circumstances—a trifle absent and preoccupied.

"I will go for her, Lord Denbigh, if you wish," he said, quickly; and then, "but it is unnecessary, for, hush! she is coming."

He went hurriedly forward and opened the door. Sibyl said she heard him mutter a few indistinct words to me in a low, impressive tone, after which he drew back and permitted me to return to the seat I had quitted.

Lord Denbigh, still with the annoyed expression on his face, came forward to me. "How are you, Miss Hilliard?"

He might as well have addressed a block of ice, as far as any responsiveness was concerned. His face grew quite angry, and he turned to Tresham without the courtesy that usually characterized his manner.

"Mr. Tresham," he said, with some heat, "if you are responsible for this nonsense I must ask you to put an end to it. I do not approve of such things, and I beg you to recall Miss Hilliard to her normal consciousness."

Tresham came up to me at once. As he passed his hand gently, once or twice, over my eyes, my wide, weary lids closed, I drew a few deep breaths, and then reopened my eyes upon the wondering circle.

Lord Denbigh approached, solicitously. I looked at him in perplexity and gave a little shiver.

"You do not feel any the worse for this tomfoolery?" he asked, gently. "Will you have a glass of sherry or something?"

I shook my head and tried to recall what had happened, and why they were all looking so strangely at me. A sort of sick, faint feeling possessed me, and every one had a far-off, distant look.

"What's the matter?" I asked, presently. "Did I faint, or what? Oh, no; I remember!" I continued, as memory reasserted itself. "You were trying to hypnotize me, Mr. Tresham: you must have succeeded, for I feel rather queer. Was I silly?"

Seeing that I was myself again, the others pressed around me.

"Not very," said Mrs. Reggie: "no more than the rest of us, I fancy. But do you remember what you did after you left the room, Miss Hilliard? Sir Robby declared that you were a free agent and had given Mr. Tresham the slip. Come, tell us, have you been doing a clever bit of acting, or were you really fulfilling Mr. Tresham's suggestions?"

"How can I tell?" I asked, non-committally.

"Why, do you know where you went?" broke in Yvonne, impatiently.

"Certainly," I assented.

"Where did you go?" she asked.

"To my room."

"You were gone a long time. What were you doing there?"

"I went for my handkerchief."

"I should think you might have made half a dozen in that amount of time. Did you take a nap while you were there?"

They all laughed, but evidently expected me to say something more in explanation of my absence. This I could not do,—the fact being that I could remember nothing more. It seemed that but one idea con-

nected with it was impressed on my brain,—simply that I had gone to my room for my handkerchief. Only this and nothing more.

They harped so long on the subject that it began to annoy me. I did not feel quite like myself, either; and, remarking that I had not bidden Lord Denbigh a proper "welcome home," I rose with the purpose of joining him and his mother, who were conversing together somewhat apart from the rest.

As I gained my feet, leaving the support of the chair, and sought to take a few steps forward, a terrible giddiness overcame me. The room reeled, and everything swam before my eyes. I tried to recover myself before the others—who were engrossed with the topic of our late amusement—should observe me, and succeeded in moving from their midst. Then utter confusion overwhelmed me; I staggered, swayed, threw out my hands with a vague intention of clutching something, anything, for support, and the next instant should have fallen to the floor but for Lord Denbigh. I did not lose consciousness, for I remember quite distinctly hearing his angry exclamation, "That cursed nonsense!" and also recall the frightened, pitying expressions of alarm from the others. My condition was quite indescribable, but it was fearful. I can revive the sensations now as I think of them, and I shudder at the memory.

The men, Tresham and Lord Denbigh excepted, fled from the room, each with the intention of procuring that kind of alcoholic stimulant which most favorably commended itself to his own individual palate; while the women, at Lady Denbigh's desire, withdrew into the background, leaving their hostess to administer what restoratives her long experience suggested.

Tresham, after a few moments' hesitation, came forward and addressed Lady Denbigh.

"I think I can help Miss Hilliard, if you will allow me," he offered, with some diffidence.

Lord Denbigh flashed an angry glance at him.

"We will not trouble you," he said, somewhat hotly, replying in his mother's stead. "Your folly has already done enough mischief, if you will pardon my saying so."

Tresham looked sore and wounded at the reproach.

"No one can possibly regret this misadventure more than I, Lord Denbigh," he said, with dignity. "I blame myself severely for being the unhappy occasion of it; though, I assure you, it was the farthest thing from my intentions to work any harm to Miss Hilliard."

He bowed and left the room; and, although three years and more have elapsed since that night, I can still see, whenever I think of him, the hurt, almost tenderly solicitous look upon his dark face. It was the last glimpse I have ever had of him.

As strength slowly returned to me, assisted by Lady Denbigh's skilled endeavors, I expressed a desire to go to my room; and Lord Denbigh insisted upon accompanying me to my door, in order that I might have the support of his arm. He guided me as tenderly and carefully as a mother her tottering infant, and as we paused to say good-night he said, holding my hand a moment gently in his, while his kind eyes looked with a deeply significant expression into mine,—

"I must not go away again during your visit, Miss Hilliard. I cannot bear to think that ill should befall you under my roof."

"Indeed, we missed you dreadfully," I returned, not feeling quite up to the occasion, which at another time would have served for the display of a bit of coquetry.

"We!" he repeated. "The term is too generic to quite please me. I prefer the more specific pronoun." He looked meaningfully at me, and his face was flushed with deep feeling; then, as he saw me lean wearily against the wall, his unselfish solicitude crowded down his passion. "You are dead tired," he said, quickly. "I won't trouble you. Good-night."

He raised my hand to his lips a moment, and, opening the door for me, stood aside to let me pass in. I paused on the threshold.

"Lord Denbigh," I said, clasping my hands nervously together, for I still felt weak and almost hysterical, "do you remember my telling you that that man would do me an injury?"

He nodded his head. "It was the first thing I thought of when they told me he had hypnotized you," he replied.

"And yet I had quite overcome my distrust of him, and we were the best of friends. He has been most kind and considerate to me, but now I shall feel terribly uncomfortable about him. It is fearful to think that any one has such power over you." I shuddered.

"I would not let that trouble me, if I were you. You may never meet him again," Denbigh said, reassuringly. "He leaves here to-morrow, and will sail next week, he tells me, for America, where he may permanently reside. Now, good-night, Miss Hilliard, and happy dreams. Don't think any more about Tresham; there are others who would be glad to fill your thoughts, you know." He smiled and closed the door.

As I turned away and approached the dressing-table, mechanically taking off my rings, as was my custom, a figure came forward out of the shadowy depths of the room. It was Julie.

"Why, Julie!" I exclaimed, "you here! I was just about to ring for you."

"Yes, mademoiselle," she returned; "I have been here all the evening, ever since you went down to dinner. There was fresh chiffon to put on your gown for to-morrow morning, and I had not time to attend to it in the day."

A thought struck me.

"Did you not go down to supper in the servants' hall?" I asked.

"No, mademoiselle: I have a *migraine*, and Mrs. Trickett gave me a cup of tea early, in the housekeeper's room."

"Then you have really been here all the evening?" I said, in amazement. "Did you not go below for a few minutes?"

"No, mademoiselle."

"But, Julie," I remonstrated, "you were not here when I came up for my handkerchief?"

The girl looked at me in wide-eyed surprise.

"Mademoiselle has not been up here since I dressed her for dinner."

"But I have, Julie," I insisted. "I came up for my handkerchief."

A bright spot of color came into Julie's cheeks. Evidently she thought I suspected her of telling me a falsehood.

"Nevertheless," she said, "what I tell Mademoiselle is true. If Mademoiselle doubts me, let her ask Estelle, Mademoiselle d'Alembert's maid, who was with me. I confess it was not quite the right thing to admit her here, but we come from the same province, and she has friends who are also my friends. She wished to read me a letter from home, and then we fell to talking a bit."

The girl was growing so excited in the attempt to vindicate her probity, that I hastened to soothe her. I succeeded in calming her by asserting my unbounded confidence in her, but my own perplexity grew apace. What did it mean? I could swear that I came to my room after leaving the group in the drawing-room, and yet I had not seen Julie, who had incontestable proof that she was there,—nor had she seen me. I grew nervous and irritable thinking of it and trying to reconcile such conflicting statements, and, despite the glass of orange-flower water that Julie prepared to quiet my nerves, I passed a wretched night.

I went down to breakfast late the next morning, feeling miserably unstrung, and was relieved to hear that Tresham had already taken his departure. I found a note from him at my plate, in which he lamented the effect his effort to entertain had had upon me and begged my forgiveness. He assured me that this experience had taught him a lesson, and he should be exceedingly cautious in future how he made use of so harmful an agency.

It was a very charming and courteous expression of regret, and again my opinion of him fluctuated between good and ill. Certainly, I decided, there was much to like in him, though it surely was as well that a being so dangerously responsive as I should feel that his influence was removed from my vicinity.

The weather had cleared during the night, and the sun shone so invitingly that we were all only too glad to avail ourselves of its promise and go forth to enjoy its rays.

Lord Denbigh took a coachful of us over to view a neighboring ruin, and I enjoyed every breath of the cool, fresh air, perched high up beside him on the box-seat. I insisted that Yvonne should occupy the post of honor on the return, for I knew how dearly she would value the privilege, and felt sorry for her rather awkward and, as it seemed to me, unpleasant situation as regarded Lord Denbigh.

That she was deeply in love with him scarcely any one who observed them together could doubt, and that her love was quite unreciprocated I, at least, had every reason to know. Indeed, their host's immediate and constantly increasing interest in me had been quite patent to all the party from the first, and the rather pointed manner in which he singled me out for special attentions had provoked considerable comment—among the women at least.

"My dear," Sibyl had whispered to me that very morning when at last I had made my appearance in the breakfast-room, "it is well you have shown up. I think a more protracted absence would have sent 'his lordship' clean off his head. Evelyn, I see the shadowy nimbus

of a coronet about thy beautiful brow. Think well, my dear! Remember the poet saith, 'Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown;' and mark me, charming and ingenuous as *la petite* Yvonne appears, she hath claws, and upon occasion, I warrant me, can scratch."

I remembered this remark as I chanced to catch Yvonne's eye when I dismounted from my high perch on reaching the ruins, and, as I believe it exceedingly bad policy to make enemies unnecessarily, I sacrificed my pleasure to hers, and was rewarded by a dainty peck from her lips when we got home.

Lord Denbigh, however, was less grateful. He looked at me reproachfully as we entered the hall together.

"Why did you do it, Miss Hilliard?" he asked, in a low tone, as I paused before the fire to warm my hands.

"Do what?" I replied, turning a pair of very innocent eyes upon him.

"Give up your seat coming home."

"Oh!" I exclaimed, lightly, "it did not seem quite fair to Yvonne to monopolize you so exclusively."

"And, pray, why not?" he returned, with a slight frown. "Yvonne d'Alembert is nothing to me—nor ever will be," he added, conclusively.

I was about to speak, when a muffled sneeze close to us interrupted me. It seemed to come from behind a very tall screen that was placed quite near the fire, in a position to ward off the draught from the staircase: the next moment the soft closing of a door warned us that the person who had so involuntarily broken in upon our conversation had escaped. I looked at my companion in dismay.

"Let us hope it was not Yvonne," I ejaculated, fervently. "But no: it is scarcely probable that she would have stooped to listen, is it?"

He passed over my question.

"I trust that it was not she," he responded. "But, even so, she has only heard a repetition of what she already knows. Her guardians were long since informed that I should never avail myself of the honor Monsieur d'Alembert proposed doing me. Yvonne has always been free, as far as I am concerned."

He made his explanation with evident intention, probably divining that I had been informed of the conditions of Monsieur d'Alembert's will, and desiring to leave me in no doubt as to his absolute freedom from any engagement to Yvonne. At that moment a servant announced luncheon, which had been deferred till our return from driving, and we joined the others.

If indeed Yvonne had been the eavesdropper, her manner gave no evidence of it. She was, if anything, more *empressée* than usual to me; while toward Lord Denbigh she bore herself with affectionate familiarity. I felt convinced that the listener had been some curious servant.

The house-party was augmented Monday by several fresh guests who had come for the ball which was to be on Wednesday, and who stretched the accommodations of the fine old house to their utmost limits. Most of these I already knew, but, as they play no important part in my life, it is unnecessary to describe them.

Tuesday afternoon, as we were having tea, Yvonne d'Alembert came up to me. "I want to rest a little before dinner; don't you?" she said. "I am dead tired of talking to all these people. Come up with me and help me choose what ornaments I shall wear to-morrow night."

Now, as it happened, I was not being bored in the least, for Robby Starkweather had just informed me of a letter he had recently received from Derrington containing news of "that brute Sturgis," as Robby called him. I had expressed a desire to hear the letter, and Robby had gone to fetch it for me. Besides, I had felt a little coldly toward Yvonne ever since I had suspected her of listening in the hall: so I excused myself.

"Sorry, Yvonne dear," I said, "but I don't feel in the least tired, and Sir Robby has gone to fetch a letter for me to read. It would be ungracious of me to leave. Get some one else, dear."

She looked disappointed.

"No," she said. "I don't care to show any one else where my jewels are kept. I'll have to make a selection myself."

"Well, then, *au revoir* till dinner."

She nodded and left the room.

Robby's letter was not very interesting, the allusions to Paul being very brief and unsatisfactory, and as he read I let my glance roam about the beautiful little room. I say little, as this smaller drawing-room was very considerably dwarfed by the larger one, though the size of this would have put to shame many much more pretentious apartments.

There was a merry, low chatter of delicately intoned voices going on, accompanied by the deeper bass of the masculine element; and it seemed to me, as I gazed, that the lots of these men and women had indeed fallen to them in happy places, and that I, Evelyn Hilliard, the daughter of a New England huckster and his probably no more highly born wife, was a very fortunate girl to have penetrated these magic circles.

Fancy! What a position for a lowly "Miss E Pluribus Unum," as Mr. Chisholm called me! A baronet, the grandson of one earl, sitting at my feet reading to me a letter from another earl (who was a rejected suitor), while a third earl (who was in every way likely to become another rejected swain) leaned carelessly against my chair. Surely, I laughed to myself, it is not the *early* bird that catches this worm.

I must have chuckled audibly instead of to myself over this splendid witticism, for Lord Denbigh stooped tenderly to ask what had amused me. Before I could reply, the door was flung open, and, with hurried, flying feet, Yvonne d'Alembert rushed into the room. Her face was white, and her eyes gleamed with anger and affright, as, after a moment's survey of the apartment, she came straight toward us.

Lord Denbigh started forward, while I, from what impulse I know not, stretched forth my hand and laid it heavily on his, which he had not yet taken from my chair. I cannot say why, but I felt that there was danger menacing me, and I involuntarily turned to him.

The touch of my fingers was all-sufficient to make him pause. I felt his hand tremble a little beneath mine as he addressed Yvonne d'Alembert.

"Yvonne, what is it?" he asked.

"My jewels!" she almost gasped. "My jewels! They are every one gone—stolen from my trunk!"

CHAPTER VII.

It may easily be imagined what a startling effect Yvonne's statement produced. Her appearance as she entered the drawing-room was so agitated and unusual that even those who did not catch her words at once divined that something out of the common had taken place, and immediately crowded up to us in order to learn what that something was.

Lord Denbigh saw at a glance that it was impossible to keep the matter secret, for already Yvonne was being besieged with questions. In the midst of the Babel of tongues his grave voice was heard addressing the excited girl: it immediately imposed silence upon the others.

"Are you absolutely sure of this, Yvonne?" he asked. "You are positive your maid has not taken your jewels out to clean them in anticipation of to-morrow?"

"Positive," Yvonne replied, her accent becoming more marked by reason of her agitation. "Estelle was there. I rang for her to come and assist me when I first went to my room."

"She has no knowledge of their whereabouts?"

"Absolutely none. She is crazy,—wild; more shocked even than I."

Such a statement seemed scarcely credible, as the French girl appeared to be wrought up to the highest pitch of excitement of which the human system is capable.

"It is, of course, impossible to suspect Estelle," Lord Denbigh continued, knitting his brows in deepest perplexity. "And yet she, you, and I are the only persons who know where your jewels were kept."

I had sometimes been a little suspicious of Yvonne d'Alembert's pretended affection for me: it had seemed to my less expansive American temperament too intense for a plant of such rapid growth, and I had never reciprocated it, although I had liked her well enough. Now, however, I had occasion to discover what a false growth it had been. The glance she flashed upon me revealed the depths of her heart and tore all disguise from her sentiments. Her shrill, angry tones were charged with a malevolent meaning as she negatived Lord Denbigh's statement.

"You are wrong, Denbigh," she said, while a breathless hush, as of expectation, held the others so quiet that the fall of a pin might have been audible.

Lord Denbigh looked surprised.

"Wrong!" he exclaimed. "Yvonne, surely you have not been so foolish as to tell people where you kept your jewels: if so, you have only yourself to blame for your loss."

"I know it," she returned.

"Whom have you told?"

For a moment she delayed her reply, looking me squarely in the eye with an expression of malignant triumph on her face. I knew then, beyond peradventure, that she had indeed been the listener in the hall; there was an unmistakable "I mean to get even with you" declaration in the look she flashed at me. Then she dropped her glance to the floor with an affectation of reluctance, and replied, with apparent hesitation,—

"I disclosed their place of concealment to—Evelyn Hilliard."

Lord Denbigh drew a sigh of relief, although he seemed a little puzzled by Yvonne's manner, while a murmur of disappointment broke from the rest.

"And to no one else?"

"To no one else," she replied, shortly, apparently—to me at least—chagrined at the utter failure of her suggestion. I fancied that she had hoped to direct suspicion upon me, but if such had been indeed her intention it had failed most signally of its aim.

Lord Denbigh turned to me:

"Miss Hilliard, you have not betrayed Yvonne's confidence to your maid, I am sure?"

"To no one, Lord Denbigh," I returned, firmly.

"It is most strange," he said, "and most unfortunate. I must request, as a special favor, that nothing be said of the affair before the servants. I beg particularly that you ladies will not mention it to your maids.—As for Estelle, Yvonne, tell her that the recovery of the jewels depends upon her silence, and you will take the best means of securing it. Come with me to the library, if you please: I must discuss the matter at greater length with you before taking further measures to trace your loss."

As they withdrew, the party divided up into little groups, all occupied with the one absorbing topic of the robbery.

The shadow of the mysterious and unfortunate event hung over the approaching ball, and to many dimmed its brilliancy. It is an uncomfortable sensation to feel that you are possibly living under the same roof with a thief; and the chagrin and trouble which Yvonne's loss had caused her host and hostess—to say nothing of her own grief and anger at her misfortune—reacted necessarily upon us all.

Although pretending indifference before the others, I felt deeply the innuendo contained in Yvonne's remark. It had been uttered so publicly and with such evident intention that I found it difficult to refrain from resenting it, and I was as distant in my manner toward the French girl as consideration for Lady Denbigh permitted.

I could not help reverting to the annoyance she had caused me, on the evening of the ball, as Lord Denbigh and I were sitting out a dance together in the conservatory. He had done everything possible to put matters *en train* for the apprehension of the thief, and even at that

moment a detective from Scotland Yard, in the guise of a florist's assistant, was stationed in the house, endeavoring to find some evidence which should result in the recovery of the jewels.

Lord Denbigh had referred to my apparent lack of spirits and want of interest in the magnificently planned festivity.

"I had thought of your pleasure, especially, in arranging for it," he said; "and now you seem *distracted* and bored."

"I am sorry," I replied, really regretting that I could not more fully rise to the occasion; "but I have such an uncomfortable feeling about Miss d'Alembert. It has quite robbed me of my usual peace of mind."

He looked slightly uneasy. "About Yvonne?" he asked.

"Yes; I cannot rid myself of the impression that she thinks me in some way involved in this mysterious and greatly-to-be-deplored business."

Lord Denbigh did not express the astonishment I had expected, though he scoffed at the idea I advanced.

"You a thief, Miss Hilliard! a pretty suggestion!" he said, lightly. I laughed a little scornfully.

"Not exactly that," I returned. "If I thought Miss d'Alembert capable, for a moment, of regarding me in such a light, I should not consider even the wide roof of Denbigh Court broad enough to shelter us both; but I feel that she thinks I may have betrayed her confidence and that I am unwilling to confess it."

My companion's brow wore a troubled frown as he nodded an assent to my suggestion.

"Yes," he replied, "she has some such fancy, I believe; but it is one of those ridiculous whims which no amount of arguing will dislodge from her foolish brain. Yvonne is a singular girl, Miss Hilliard."

"I think she is," I agreed, coldly. "I assure you that I shall make no effort to dislodge any of her whimsicalities. If she choose to believe me the actual thief, she may do so; but I would like again to assert most emphatically to you, Lord Denbigh, that to no living being have I ever mentioned the secret that Miss d'Alembert confided to me. As my host you are entitled——"

He interrupted me. There was a pained expression in his kind blue eyes as he said, raising his hand as if in protest against further assurance from me,—

"Miss Hilliard, don't. It troubles me greatly to think that you should ever dream that I could suspect you of a breach of trust. Under other circumstances, a woman who should so calumniate you could not remain beneath my roof; but Yvonne's loss has given her a peculiar claim to my hospitality which must be allowed by me. There are circumstances in connection with this affair which render it deeply perplexing, and I cannot tell you how concerned I am about it. Did it involve merely the loss of the jewels I should not feel so troubled, disagreeable as it is to have such a thing happen in one's house; but there are other considerations which make it a most complex and difficult piece of business."

The demands of my partners here interrupted us, and when I next

danced with Lord Denbigh I took good care not to advert to a subject which I saw was causing him such deep annoyance. The ball passed off as balls do. I never enjoyed one less in my life, though my experience was probably an exceptional one, as the others seemed to have a royally good time.

I think of all the women in the house I most admired Constance Dering, she was so thorough-bred and genuine. Admiration had not in the least spoiled her, and she was as much pleased with attention and as much surprised by it as a young girl. Envy or jealousy has no part in Constance, and she is ever ready to share the homage and devotion of men with other women. She and I were rapidly forming a friendship which the passage of years has cemented into a strong bond. She has been to me what no other woman, not even my own mother, has been,—a sincere adviser, a loyal supporter, a gentle admonisher; and whatever of good has developed in me since I first met her is due to her example and interest.

The next morning Mrs. Reggie, Carty Horsford, and I were in the billiard-room, aimlessly knocking the balls about, when Lord Denbigh came in, and, taking down a cue, joined us. I could see that he was absent and preoccupied, and, after making a few random and not very successful shots, finding himself near me and somewhat apart from the others, he said, in a low tone,—

"Miss Hilliard, will you come out for a little stroll in the park with me? I wish to speak to you about something."

I assented readily, and, excusing myself from Mrs. Reggie and Carty, ran up-stairs to get ready.

Julie was not in my dressing-room, and, as I did not really require her aid in donning my simple out-of-door attire, I thought it not worth while to ring for her. But as I passed down-stairs again I chanced upon her on one of the wide landings, where she was assisting a man, in working-clothes, to unwind some decorations of the previous night. Somewhat surprised at her employment, I called her to me.

"What are you doing there?" I demanded, in rather a sharp tone.

The girl courtesied and blushed. She was somewhat of a coquette, and evidently flattered herself she was making a conquest. "Monsieur said he needed assistance, and asked me to aid him, mademoiselle."

"And pray, is the Court so short of servants that the guests' maids should be called upon to supply the deficiency? Who is that man?"

"Monsieur is a florist's assistant from London, mademoiselle."

A light dawned upon me. I was, then, under suspicion, as it were: my maid was being *exploited* for information that might implicate her mistress in a felony. Truly this was growing interesting. It was well Lord Denbigh had requested a few moments' conversation with me; I, too, should have something to say to him. Meanwhile, I had nothing to fear from any amount of surveillance, and was willing that Julie should be "pumped" to any extent.

"Well, well," I said to her, moderating the asperity of my tone, "go back and help the man, if he really requires you." And I passed on, apparently calm and nonchalant as usual, though inwardly

my heart was throbbing and my blood boiling at the indignity that was being put upon me.

Lord Denbigh was awaiting me in the lower hall, and together we went out into the shrubbery. I controlled myself until we had left the house a little way behind us, and then I turned upon my companion, with glowing cheeks and blazing eyes, though my voice was as cold and cutting as steel.

Although I knew Yvonne d'Alembert to be the instigator of this outrage, it was against this man that I felt my anger aroused. She was a woman, jealous, revengeful, and passionate, a small, venomous insect that stung in resentment of an injury—she was beneath my consideration; but Lord Denbigh was my host, and so the guardian of my comfort, the custodian of my honor, who should have secured me against the most trifling slight and have absolutely defended me from such an indignity as this that I was now suffering beneath his roof: him I held answerable for my wounded feelings.

"Lord Denbigh," I said, suddenly, cutting him short in some irrelevant story with which he was endeavoring to beguile the time until he could make up his mind to introduce his subject, "you have brought me out here to speak to me about something; well, I wish also to speak to you about something, and, as I am sure that you are courteous enough to subscribe to the French motto '*place aux dames*,' I will, with your consent, take precedence. Why is my maid being interviewed by your detective? Why am I being made the object of espionage? Have you, the master of Denbigh Court, no authority within its walls, or is it with your consent that one of its guests is being subjected to insulting suspicion and annoyance?"

Lord Denbigh looked at me with an expression of deep surprise and wounded feeling upon his fine features. He paused and appeared to reflect a moment before he replied to my angry address; then he said, gravely,—

"Miss Hilliard, you do me scant justice if you believe for a moment that I would tolerate any proceedings beneath my roof that could tend to diminish the comfort or wound the feelings of the least of my guests. How much less, then, would I allow such misfortune to afflict one whose honor is as dear to me as my own, and whom I would save from even a passing annoyance at the cost of any sacrifice to myself! Evelyn, I did not bring you out here for this purpose, but how can I better prove to you the sincerity of my words, or the depth of my respect and consideration for you, than by asking you now, when you suspect me of holding you and your dignity in slight esteem, to be my wife?"

There was a profound earnestness, almost solemnity, in his voice which gave weight to his words. The passion which I had often heard throbbing in his tones was absent from them now. It seemed as if he wished me to feel that he was conferring upon me the highest compliment that a man can pay a woman, and not that he was begging for a gift for himself. I divined that he read me accurately, discovering the sore condition of my heart and pride, and that he was ruthlessly crowding his own passion to the wall that my wounded

self-love might be soothed by a perception of the honor he would fain do me.

However, love and marriage were far from my mind at the present moment ; I was too full of the other subject to even consider this. Yet Lord Denbigh's words produced one effect that he had desired : they propitiated my self-esteem. I turned to him gratefully, though a little carelessly, considering that what was but a trifling interlude to me was a matter of immense consequence to him.

"You have done me a very great honor, Lord Denbigh," I said, somewhat hurriedly, for I was impatient to get back to the more interesting topic. "I thank you for it, even while I must decline it."

Then, at my rather cold words, his deep feeling burst forth. He turned a very agitated face to mine.

"Evelyn," he said, beseechingly, "*must* you?"

That was all ; but the few words were eloquent of all the love, entreaty, and protest of his great heart. I hated to pain him so, he had been such a good, kind friend to me ; yet, though I knew how deeply mamma would resent my conduct, I could not do him such injustice as to consent to marry him without love.

"Yes," I replied, gravely ; "yes, Lord Denbigh : I do not love you as you deserve to be loved,—as a woman ought to love the man she will marry."

There was a pause. He had turned aside to recover himself, for this was a severe blow to him, I knew. He was not the man to love lightly, and I felt what a pity it was that I could not accept for my own the heart of this kindly, loyal, and unselfish gentleman. When he turned to me again his features were quite composed, and he held out his hand with the air of a good comrade.

"This shall make no difference in our friendship, Evelyn?"

"None," I said, heartily, giving his hand a cordial pressure.

"And you will not again accuse me of carelessness where you are concerned?" In spite of his efforts, his voice broke a little.

"No," I replied. Monosyllables seemed to be all I could muster in the way of speech.

"Then let us return to our 'mutton,' " he went on, with a lightness that I felt to be assumed for the purpose of setting me at my ease. "I did not know that Rowell, the detective, was interviewing your maid ; if I had, I should have informed you of it. It is probably Yvonne's doing, for she seems bewitched by the idea that you have inadvertently disclosed the secret of the jewel-box to your woman. She has a bit of evidence that she thinks corroborative of her theory : it is this. Do you recognize it?"

He drew from his breast-pocket an object and handed it to me. It was a very fine handkerchief, with a tiny edge of Valenciennes lace bordering it and the initials E. H., worked in cipher, inside a small wreath of forget-me-nots. I took it from him, identifying it at a glance.

"Certainly, I know it," I said, with unhesitating frankness : "it is one of my handkerchiefs. Why should it compromise Julie?"

Lord Denbigh's face grew a shade graver.

"Well," he answered, slowly, "Estelle found it in one of the trays of her mistress's box. Yvonne thinks your maid probably had it about her when she opened the box in her search for the jewels, and it fell in."

I felt utterly confounded. I had always placed absolute confidence in Julie, who had been with mamma for several years. I knew positively that from me she had never learned of the whereabouts of the jewels; and, besides, it seemed a very far-fetched assumption that she should have been in possession of one of my handkerchiefs on just that occasion, and that it should have dropped into the box without her seeing it. I was convinced that, though she would not dare hint it to Lord Denbigh, Yvonne's theory was quite different from this. A sudden thought occurred to me.

"Lord Denbigh," I said, "to hinge a suspicion of Julie upon such evidence as this is quite too ridiculous. It seems far more likely to point at me as the thief. I think I have a much more natural solution of the handkerchief matter: it is that it dropped from my lap into the box on the day that Yvonne showed me her jewels."

Lord Denbigh shook his head.

"No," he said, "that is improbable; for Estelle opened the box again that night before Yvonne retired, in order to get out a star which she wished me to take up to London to have cleaned for her. Both women are quite positive they should have seen the handkerchief if it had been there then."

"The facts seem strong against me," I said, with a nervous laugh. "I wonder at your temerity in asking a possible felon to become the Countess of Denbigh. I confess I don't understand the matter, but, for heaven's sake, don't make poor Julie a scapegoat! I am sure the girl is honest; I have never had the least cause to suspect her——" I broke off suddenly, for a little, almost forgotten, circumstance had recurred to my memory: it was that of Julie's pretended presence in my room on the evening of Lord Denbigh's return, when I had gone to fetch my handkerchief.

Was it possible that the girl was indeed guilty and had taken that opportunity to commit the theft? Yet she asserted that Estelle had been with her in my dressing-room. What if Yvonne's maid had been the instigator of the deed and Julie but her accomplice!

I could swear that the two women had not been in the room when I entered it, else I could not have escaped seeing them; and yet this was their false alibi. I remembered how angry and confused Julie had looked when I charged her with not being where she asserted that she was. What if it were indeed so? I turned to Lord Denbigh.

"When did Yvonne last see her jewels?" I asked.

"On the afternoon of my return from London, she says. It was a dull day, if you remember, and she amused herself by looking them over, with a view to having certain ones reset. She put back in the case some that she had been wearing, and took out a fresh lot, which she wore at intervals until the afternoon upon which she discovered her loss."

I knew it was not Yvonne's habit to go to the box every day, as

this necessitated more trouble for her maid than she cared to give the not very robust little woman. It was her custom to take out at one time a supply sufficient to last three or four days,—unless some unusual festivity were in prospect,—and she had shown me a strong-box in which she usually deposited at night the jewels she had worn in the evening.

Here was fresh evidence against Julie; for was not that very evening of Denbigh's return the same that witnessed her mysterious conduct? Knowing Lord Denbigh to be my best friend, I thought that I could not act more wisely than in placing the incident before his eyes; and this I did.

He looked extremely puzzled.

"I don't understand it at all," he said. "I am as thoroughly convinced of Estelle's honesty as Yvonne is. Why, the woman has had unnumbered opportunities to make way with all of Yvonne's jewels if she wished to. No, I am sure of her; though it is certainly most perplexing. But I have something else to show you, which no one, save myself, has yet seen,—not even Rowell. It may not have any bearing upon the case, and yet it is a very strange bit of writing."

He took out his note-case and from it drew a fragment of very dirty creased paper, which he handed me.

"I picked this up on the gravel sweep before the hall-door the morning after I returned from town. It was wet and sodden with the rain, and I picked it up because I dislike to see bits of paper on the gravel. The first words attracted my notice, and, as it bore no superscription or signature, I read it. See what you make of it?"

I took the unwholesome-looking morsel and read as follows:

"against la belle Américaine. I cannot see how it would compromise her. Still, you have my permission to go in and win. If you succeed, your reward will be a sufficient one. Don't let a former disappointment dishearten" That was all.

I bit my lip in deep perplexity.

"What do you make of it?" I asked Lord Denbigh. "As I am usually denominated *la belle Américaine* by your delicately flattering journals, I suppose I must be the subject of this mysterious bit of paper."

"So I thought," he assented. "I do not know the handwriting, and the meaning of the words is a riddle. I don't exactly see how it can have any connection with this jewel affair, but I thought I would show it to you and see if you could throw any light upon it. It sounds, and yet does not sound, like advice to a possible suitor."

We strolled slowly back to the house, discussing our perplexities without coming any nearer a solution of them. This portion of a letter with its strange reference to me added a fresh disquietude to the fast-accumulating stock that was rendering my position a most uncomfortable one.

The evening after a ball should be invariably followed by some sort of entertainment. Reaction from gayety is terribly depressing, and I was not the only one at Denbigh Court that night upon whose spirits a cloud seemed to rest. Nothing but politeness prevented our

yawning in each other's faces, and even Carty's indomitable buoyancy failed to respond to our need. But one couple among us was bold enough to venture upon a *tête-à-tête*, Robby and Sibyl, who, being presumably deeply in love, were content to sit gazing silently into one another's eyes.

The rest of us simply sat about the huge room, looking wearily into vacancy,—occasionally, as we felt the polite necessity forced upon us, hazarding some inane remark that fell, with almost audible weight, to the ground. I was about meditating an early escape to my room under the ever-convenient plea of headache, when the ponderous silence was suddenly broken by Fifi.

"What is that, Evelyn," she asked, bending her head forward, "glistening down there in the *ruche* of your gown? Wait a bit! Don't move, or I shall lose it. It looks too large for a pin."

Of course the general attention was at once turned upon me and my apparel. I stooped languidly forward from the depths of my *fauteuil* to discover what the object could be that had attracted Fifi's notice, but before I could reach the bottom of my skirt she had darted forward and knelt at my feet; in another moment she had disentangled, from the lace *ruche* that trimmed the edge of my skirt, a brilliant object which she held up for me to take.

"Why, it is one of your ear-rings, Evelyn!" she exclaimed.

I made no attempt to take it from her; a cold hand was clutching my heart. Before I could command my voice to speak, Yvonne d'Alembert came forward.

"Let me look at it, Josephine, if you please," she requested.

"Yes,"—as a cold little smile, devilish in its suggestiveness, played about her mouth,—*"I thought so: it is mine."*

Had a bomb-shell been thrown into the midst of the assembled party, the general consternation could not have been greater. There was a common movement of dismay, while I—well, I simply felt that a horrible net was being drawn about me, choking and strangling me in its cruel, dreadful meshes. Although I knew these people to be my friends—as society friends go—and was assured that several among them were really deeply attached to me, yet I felt frightened. What friendship could stand the test of such a mass of circumstantial evidence as was accumulating to prove me the thief of Yvonne d'Alembert's jewels?

Giving a little choking cry, I rose to my feet and turned with wide, horrified eyes to Lord Denbigh.

"Lord Denbigh!" I exclaimed, with broken tones. "What does it mean? How, how did this horrible thing happen?"

Before he had time to reply, Yvonne spoke. Her eyes were ablaze with anger, her whole small frame quivering with passion and hatred.

"How did it happen?" she repeated: "I will tell you, Miss Hil-liard, for this is but a proof of what to my mind has been all along a certainty. When you left us all assembled here on the night of Mr. Tresham's hypnotic experiments, you were absent a considerable length of time, and for that absence you refused to account, excepting by the

statement that you went to your room for your handkerchief. You are not an adept in dissimulation, for you had forgotten the arrangement you had made with your woman to engage my maid in your own dressing-room that you might have a fair field for your operations. Estelle is willing to swear that you never came to your room for your handkerchief, she being in that apartment with your maid all the evening; and, furthermore, she afterwards found the handkerchief for which you were searching—where do you think, ladies and gentlemen?—in my jewel-box, where Miss Hilliard had dropped it.”

Her point told upon the startled listeners; I could see the astonishment depicted upon their several faces, and did not wonder at it, for I, myself, was crushed by the testimony against me.

“Do you chance to remember the gown Miss Hilliard wore that night?” she proceeded immediately. “I do: it was a very pretty one, and I admired it, as she will perhaps recollect. It is the same one she now wears, in the ruche of which Josephine has just discovered one of my ear-rings. Is anything more needed to prove who stole my jewels?”

Lord Denbigh had made several attempts to stem the tide of her eloquence, but in vain. Her high French voice rose shrill and voluble above his remonstrance. Now, as she paused, he went up to her with gleaming eyes and threatening manner. Had she been a man I think he would have struck her, even though she were a guest beneath his roof.

“Stop!” he said, in a low, hoarse tone that showed the curb he was trying to put upon his temper. “Another word, and, woman though you are, you leave this house immediately. What you have said about Miss Hilliard is as false as—evil itself. I would resent such a charge if brought against any guest of mine, and how much more strongly in this case you may judge when I tell you that to-day I have asked Miss Hilliard to become my wife. Vainly, it is true; but I can assure you that, even in the face of what you consider this overwhelming mass of evidence against her, no honor that could possibly befall me should I esteem as great as that she would do me in reconsidering her decision. Unfortunately, I have no title to defend Miss Hilliard from your imputations save that which I may claim as her host, but as such you may rest assured I shall know how to shield her from further attack.”

It was a noble defence, thoroughly generous and self-forgetting; yet, as I took his arm to leave the room, I felt that it had had absolutely no material weight against that terrible charge.

Constance Dering placed her arm about my waist and accompanied us to the library, where, sinking into a chair, I covered my face with my hands and gave way to a terrible fit of weeping. Lord Denbigh, horribly concerned, sought to calm me, but wise Mrs. Reggie bade him leave me alone.

“Overstrained nerves, poor child!” she remarked, sagely. “Let her cry it out. And meanwhile, Lord Denbigh, let me unfold to you a scheme of my own devising, which may tend to throw some light on this most mysterious business. Please come and sit here.”

CHAPTER VIII.

LORD DENBIGH obeyed Mrs. Reggie's request and took the seat to which she motioned.

"Now," began Mrs. Reggie, hitching her chair a little nearer mine and possessing herself of my cold hand, "prepare for something, my dear, that will give you a shock."

I shrank a little, dreading any fresh misfortune, but the smiling kindliness of her beautiful face reassured me.

"Are you ready?" she asked, archly. "Well, then, Lord Denbigh, although I believe this little girl to be morally innocent of the theft of Yvonne d'Alembert's jewels, yet I am quite convinced it was through her agency that the crime was committed."

I started and sought to withdraw my hand, but she held it firmly. Lord Denbigh knit his brow and looked searchingly into her beautiful eyes. Evidently he was as perplexed by her words as I.

"H'm!" he said, thoughtfully; "you think her a somnambulist?"

"Well, not exactly," she replied, shaking her head. "And yet you are 'getting warm,' as the children say." Then, laying aside her light manner, as if the accusation she was about to prefer were too grave to admit of levity in the handling, she continued, quite seriously, "Lord Denbigh, you have had staying in your house, as semi-guest and semi-employé, a man whom I have never liked. It is only fair to him to say that I am a prejudiced witness against him. I have known Walter Tresham many years, and have heard so many questionable things about him that I confess I was sorry to be obliged to meet him in your house. I know that he is popular among a certain set, but that is largely owing to his family connection and the influence that the Duke of Beudesleigh exerts in his favor. Although I cannot bring a specific charge against him, yet I believe him to be a thoroughly unscrupulous, though undoubtedly clever, man. Now, into the hands of this man, possessed of a mysterious and dangerous power, Evelyn Hilliard completely committed herself on an evening which formed part of the interval of time between the occasion of Miss d'Alembert's last seeing her jewels and the discovery of their loss. What use did he make of his power over her, and what were the words he muttered to her when she returned to the drawing-room? Answer these two questions fully, and you will solve this wonderfully perplexing riddle."

She looked at us triumphantly, and even Lord Denbigh brightened up. But I shook my head. The idea seemed very far-fetched to me.

"What is it?" she asked. "Defects in my theory?"

"An enormous one," I replied. "I know what I did when I left the drawing-room: I went to my room for my handkerchief."

"My theory says you did not, your woman says you did not, and Estelle says you did not: *ergo*, you labor under the delusion of a suggestion impressed upon your mind by Tresham when you re-entered the drawing-room, and the words of which we failed to catch."

"Why should he have uttered this one suggestion aloud and the

others inaudibly?" I asked, gloomily, for I confess I did not "take much stock," as we say, in her hypothesis.

"Because I think he was a little alarmed by Lord Denbigh and feared that his mind was too distracted by the latter's anger and his own apprehensiveness lest his scheme should be detected, to impress you inaudibly."

"You are clever, Mrs. Reggie, and a dear to stand by me so unflinchingly," I said, "but"—heaving a weary, disconsolate sigh—"I fear your theory won't be of much use. Even were it less unlikely than it is, there is no way of proving it. Tresham is *en route* to America by this, and his plunder has doubtless gone with him, if he be indeed guilty. Instead of your idea being a happy solution, it is, if you will pardon me, dear, the most unfortunate explanation that could possibly be suggested of this business. It could never be tested, you see, and would simply leave me a proscribed outcast from society with a ban of *not proven* hanging about my neck."

Lord Denbigh had uttered not a word, but sat like a statue, seemingly wrapped in profound thought. As I finished speaking, he raised his head.

"I'm not so sure of that," he said. "Mrs. Reggie's assumption sounds wild, I admit, but this is the day of strange things. If we could find a good hypnotizer I do not see why we should not try the experiment. He need be told nothing of the affair, excepting that he is to suggest, if he succeed in magnetizing you, that you repeat every detail of your conduct on that night after you left the drawing-room. If the performance be such as to indicate that you were indeed the actual if not moral criminal, I should say the proof of Mrs. Reggie's theory was conclusive."

After much discussion as to the best method of procedure in order to give every advantage to Lord Denbigh's plan, it was decided that he should send Robby to town the next morning to procure a man possessed of the necessary powers to effect my release from suspicion. As I parted from my host at the library door, Mrs. Reggie being a little in advance of us, I extended both hands and looked him fully in the eyes with a depth of gratitude I found it difficult to express.

"I can never thank you," I murmured; "you have made a noble effort to save more than my life,—my good name. I shall never forget it."

"It was nothing," he returned. "I meant every word of it."

I held a little reception in my dressing-room that night. All the women, even to Lady Denbigh,—excepting, of course, Yvonne,—came to express their regret at the late occurrence and to protest their faith in me.

Lady Denbigh had begged me not to inform mamma at present of my perplexing situation, as she and her son were quite confident of unravelling the skein, and desired to keep the matter as quiet as possible.

I did not go down to tea that day, and a few moments before the dressing-bell rang a note was brought up to me from Lord Denbigh, saying that Robby had returned with a gentleman who was most pre-

possessing in manner and appearance, and of whom I need stand in no fear, as he had had long practice in his strange profession and was quite a master of it. Dinner should be served to me in my own room, or in the small drawing-room if such should be my preference.

I would not allow Yvonne d'Alembert to feel that I considered myself at all in the light of a culprit, however; and, indeed, the increased attention that was shown me by all in the house rather flattered my vanity. Sending down word, therefore, that I should dine as usual, I made a most elaborate toilette, and, summoning all my pride to my support, went down to join the other guests.

In the hall Lord Denbigh was awaiting me. It was late, and he had just time to murmur,—

"I wanted to tell you that I have had a long talk with him about hypnotism. He has related many marvellous experiences to me, and I am convinced our experiment will be a success. He is really a charming fellow."

My spirits rose at once, as he intended they should, and no one observing me through that long, formal meal would have imagined that I was the unhappy victim of circumstances sufficiently evil and inexplicable to drive an ordinary girl desperate.

The men followed us, almost immediately, into the drawing-room; for all were aware of the experiment that was to be made, and naturally so strange a proceeding aroused a corresponding amount of interest.

Lord Denbigh at once approached me. I was standing near the fire, trying to talk unconcernedly with Lady Emily, though my teeth were almost chattering with nervousness. My hands were cold and clammy, and I felt as if the dentist's chair were looming forbiddingly before me.

"How soon can we get it over?" I asked, as Denbigh came up.

"As soon as you are ready," he replied. "You don't dread it, do you?"

"Oh, no," I answered: "I am positively hungering for it."

He left the room, and in a few moments returned with a pleasant-looking man of gentlemanly manners and quite ordinary aspect, excepting that his eyes had the same singularly intense, compelling look that I had often remarked in Tresham's.

Lady Denbigh had already met him, and she at once rose and brought him forward to where I was sitting with Lady Emily.

"Emily, dear," she said, "allow me to present Mr. Grote.—My daughter, Lady Emily Starkweather, Mr. Grote.—Miss Hilliard, Mr. Grote. This is our young friend who has consented to submit herself to your experiments."

He bowed courteously, and Lady Denbigh then asked him if he preferred that the room should be cleared of the assembled company. He replied that it was not necessary, if they cared to remain; only he must ask for perfect silence and freedom from interruption. These being assured him, Lady Denbigh, with a little wave of her hand, introduced him generally to his expectant audience.

It had been arranged that Lady Emily, whose testimony would be

absolutely above suspicion, was to shadow me during my absence from the room, and, in the midst of a profound silence, I seated myself in the same chair that I had occupied on that eventful night.

Mr. Grote, assuming about the same position that Tresham had taken, placed himself before me and requested me, as had Tresham, to fix my eyes upon him. This I remember doing, but it seemed that I had scarcely looked into his strangely potent orbs when unconsciousness fell upon me. Everything appeared to fade from before my vision, and I knew no more until I heard a low, firm voice saying to me, "Open your eyes."

I did as I was bidden, and raised my lids, feeling slightly dazed and bewildered. I still sat in the same chair, and could have sworn that but a moment had elapsed since I closed my eyes. I looked about upon the familiar faces, which, to my surprise, were regarding me with delight and satisfaction; a few, those of my most intimate friends, were absolutely beaming. I passed my hand across my brow, and addressed Lord Denbigh:

"The experiment has been a failure?"

"On the contrary, a marked success," he replied.

"I did not go to Miss d'Alembert's room," I insisted.

"No?" he returned, interrogatively. "Where then did you go?"

"To my own room for a handkerchief," I replied, with decision.

A general laugh followed my assertion, and Lord Denbigh turned to Mr. Grote, who had fallen a little into the background.

"Sir," he said, in his courteous, high-bred tones, "you have done us inestimable service: your experiment has been a most remarkable success." Then, taking both my hands in his, he continued, "Miss Hil-liard, I congratulate you from the depths of my heart. Not a suspicion of doubt can remain as to the real thief of Yvonne's jewels. He has been convicted with his own weapons.—Emily, come and tell Miss Hil-liard what you saw her do."

The party, released from restraint, all pressed about to congratulate me and to hear Lady Emily's account of the late proceedings.

"After Mr. Grote had induced the necessary condition of sleep," she said, "we all sat watching eagerly, for you know, dear, we felt acutely how much depended upon the successful operation of his strange gift. Suddenly you rose from your chair and, as before, made for the door, which, opening it softly, you passed through, closing it behind you. This was my cue. I at once left the room and quickly followed you. You never, for a moment, paused or faltered in your movements; they were absolutely firm and direct, as though you were urged by some strong purpose. It was exceedingly difficult to believe that you were not complete mistress of your actions. With a swift tread you mounted the stairs, turned down the corridor leading to Yvonne's apartments, and when you reached them, without the slightest hesitation, you opened her dressing-room door. She was within, and I saw her start up angrily as you entered, and, notwithstanding her knowledge of the experiment we were trying and my warning gesture, she accosted you somewhat rudely—for, you know, she refuses to tol-

erate the possibility of Mrs. Dering's theory. Had she been a marble image, however, she could not have disturbed you less. Heeding her not in the slightest, you crossed the room, and paused only when you reached the box; then you threw up the lid, and, with rapid but sure fingers, lifted out tray after tray until you reached the cloth-covered bottom. As deftly as possible you removed the lining, and with a dexterous movement, by the aid of a pin you took from the laces on your gown, lifted the movable partition that lay beneath. Despite Yvonne's unwillingness, Denbigh had caused a length of chamois-skin to be laid there, in imitation of the jewel-case; this you lifted out quickly and carefully replaced the trays, closed the cover, and, with that abstracted, far-away gaze ever in your eyes, passed from the room and regained the corridor."

I drew a long breath. "It seems incredible," I murmured.

"So it does, dear,—so it does," Lady Emily replied. "If I had not seen it I could not have believed such a thing possible."

"Where, then, did I carry the supposed jewels?" I asked.

"Ah! that is the climax of the whole wonderful tale," she replied, in triumph. "Where, indeed, but to Tresham's own room, which is now occupied by Robby!"

Three or four of the men now came up and accosted their host.

"I say, Denbigh," began Sir Hubert Leeds, in a low voice, "we were wondering what you are going to do about Tresham. It's all very well to celebrate Miss Hilliard's acquittal from suspicion, which, however, I fancy never for a moment attached to her, save in the eyes of that excitable young Frenchwoman, who no doubt was half crazed over the loss of so much valuable property, but meantime the fact remains that the jewels are gone and that Tresham is presumably a thief at large."

Lord Denbigh looked quite easy and undisturbed, though his face wore a very grave expression.

"Your exceptions to my apparent carelessness would be well taken, Sir Hubert," he said, "were it not that I have already set the machinery in motion for Tresham's apprehension, should our experiment to-night prove successful. He has not left England, nor is he likely to do so for some time, at least. He is ill—quite seriously so, I fancy—in his town lodgings, and is under strict surveillance."

"I wonder what Beudesleigh will think of his protégé's conduct," remarked Dering.

"I fancy it won't shock his Grace very severely," returned Carty Horsford. "His own looseness of morals can't lead him to expect any very great virtue in so devoted a henchman as Tresham. I always fancied the latter did a good deal of Buddy's dirty work for him."

I overheard these remarks, and Carty's concluding sentence suggested a thought to my mind which I revolved until it became a certainty. Toward the end of the evening I managed to catch Lord Denbigh alone.

"Do you remember the exact words on that bit of paper you found?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied; "I have pondered them so much that they are quite impressed on my mind."

"Please repeat them, then," I requested.

He did so. As he concluded I nodded triumphantly.

"I thought so," I said.

"What is it?"

"Merely that that bit of paper formed part of a letter written by his Grace of Beudesleigh to his heichman, as Mr. Horsford calls Mr. Tresham. I see it all, now. The duke has never forgiven me for the slight I put upon him. When he found Mr. Tresham was to be in the house with me he commissioned him to square matters between us. I have always been convinced that Mr. Tresham was the cause of my joining the hunt that day. Then, I could not explain how he could have been instrumental in bringing it about; now, I feel that he exerted his tremendous will-power to induce my compliance with his wishes."

"But what object could he hope to attain?"

"That of injury to my looks. He knew my inexperience in the field, that I could no more take a fence than a windmill, and he anticipated my coming a cropper. I charged him with it at the time, absurd as it seemed; of course he denied it, but I always thought, notwithstanding his protestations, that he was disappointed that I escaped scot-free."

"It is a fearful thought," Lord Denbigh said, shuddering.

"That is the failure to which the duke refers. The plan for my implication in the jewel business is what he alludes to as not especially commending itself to his lofty mind, as he cannot see exactly how it would compromise me. He did not take into account the venom of a jealous woman, the accident to my handkerchief, and the chance *tête-à-tête* of Estelle and Julie in my room. Can anything be plainer than his reference to the reward of Tresham's success? A sufficient one indeed!"

"What a pair of scoundrels!" Denbigh ejaculated.

"And what a debt I owe Constance Dering for divining the plot! *À propos*, why should I have asserted again to-night that I went to my room for my handkerchief?"

"Because, following Tresham's supposed action, Grote impressed the fact upon your mind to recur to your normal consciousness when you awoke."

"Strange, passing strange!" I exclaimed. "Lord Denbigh, I am completely done up. Can I slip away to my room without saying good-night to all those people? You will bid your mother good-night for me?"

He assented, and I stole quietly away and up to my room.

At breakfast next morning we were as "merry as grigs," as they say over here. The cloud had been lifted from our spirits, and the atmosphere fairly scintillated with witty remarks. Yvonne had departed, leaving to Lord Denbigh the recovery of her jewels. He alone of all the party seemed a little quiet and subdued; but then he was always rather silent and reserved, and a little added gravity of

manner was scarcely noticeable in him. As for me, my spirits were at their best. I laughed, flirted, and chaffed Carty and Robby as if carking care had not yesterday ridden on my brow and dulled my senses.

I was about to make some pertinent rejoinder to a semi-idiotic speech of Carty's, when I was checked by the entrance of a servant with a telegram for Lord Denbigh. A low ejaculation broke from the latter as he ran his eyes over its contents; then he said, gravely,—

"I fancy the recovery of the jewels is well-nigh an accomplished fact. This wire is from Tresham's man. It says, 'Mr. Tresham mortally ill. Desires to see your lordship at once. Important.'"

There was a round of pitying exclamations from us women, while the men, less moved by the swift destruction that had overtaken Tresham, gave vent to expressions of satisfaction that the work of retribution had become so simplified.

It seems that Tresham had caught a severe cold on his journey from Denbigh Court to London. In making the necessary preparations for his approaching voyage he had neglected to take proper care of himself, and pneumonia had supervened. When Lord Denbigh reached Tresham's lodgings he found the sick man in the state of delirium which is a common accompaniment of the disease from which he was suffering, and therefore quite unconscious of his visitor's presence.

"When did he ask for me?" Lord Denbigh inquired of Briggs, Tresham's man.

"Well, my lord, Mr. Tresham 'ave not hexactly hasked for your lordship hat all. 'E 'ave scarcely been 'imself since the fever took possession of 'im; but 'e raved so constant habout your lordship that Mrs. Byrnes, the nurse, thought 'twere best your lordship should come. She thought a sight of your lordship might 'ave a quietin' himfluence hupon 'im, 'e were that wild to tell you something, something himportant."

But what that "something himportant" was Denbigh never learned from Tresham's own lips, though it took no great amount of clairvoyance to divine what it might be. The latter never regained consciousness: from delirium he passed into a state of heavy stupor, and in that condition died.

Immediately upon his death Lord Denbigh procured a search-warrant, to enable him to investigate the dead man's effects for the purpose of recovering the jewels. A necessary explanation of the affair was made to Tresham's nearest relative, but otherwise the matter was kept profoundly secret. The search was made by Lord Denbigh and Tresham's next of kin in Briggs's absence, and in a locked and sealed despatch-box—in which Tresham was wont to keep his private papers—the plunder was found.

Lord Denbigh did not return to the Court for three days, and the afternoon of his home-coming was also the eve of the breaking up of the house-party. Many of us were due the next day at other houses, and a fresh instalment of guests was to fill our vacant places at Denbigh Court.

I cannot say that I left Denbigh Court with great regret. Despite certain charming interludes, I had felt, for the greater part of my visit there, dull and depressed. I really think that Tresham exerted an uncanny influence upon me, which robbed me of my usual self-possession while in his vicinity. On the morning of my departure Lord Denbigh said to me,—

"I wish I might give that brute Beudesleigh a horse-whipping, but I don't exactly see my way clear to doing it. That bit of paper is scarcely sufficient evidence upon which to base such an accusation as complicity in a felony; besides which, I cannot drag your name in the gutter. Here, however, is a communication which I purpose sending Beudesleigh, for it is high time you were protected from his unscrupulous malignancy."

He then read the following:

"Lord Denbigh desires to inform the Duke of Beudesleigh that certain portions of a letter written by his Grace to the late Walter Tresham are in Lord Denbigh's possession. Lord Denbigh refrains from making use of this letter, wishing to save the name of the lady to whom allusion is made from being associated with a scandalous affair. If, however, all persecution of her from a certain quarter does not at once cease, Lord Denbigh will no longer hesitate in giving to the public the details of the felonious plot to which the contents of the letter point."

"I think after this, Evelyn, the wicked will cease from troubling. You see, Beudesleigh cannot possibly know what portion of the letter is in my possession, and will probably fancy I have his signature. If the letter did not emanate from him I shall receive a demand for an explanation of my meaning, in which case I shall send him an apology and acknowledge that I have made a mistake; in the other event I fancy he will maintain a discreet silence, and hereafter you will be free from his undesirable attentions."

Mr. and Mrs. Reggie and I were bound to the same house, and so journeyed thither together, to our mutual satisfaction. As the train steamed slowly away from Denbigh station, and Lord Denbigh—who had driven us down from the Court—became a mere indistinct feature in the distance, Mrs. Reggie turned to me and said,—

"Oh, Evelyn dear! what a pity you couldn't accept that charming man!"

I shook my head regretfully. "I adore him as a friend, but should probably loathe him as a husband," I said. "I fancy I should be very nasty to a husband I did not care for."

She leaned over and took my hand, and, modulating her voice yet lower, she whispered,—

"My dear, cling to that principle. Never marry a man unless you are convinced that you cannot live without him. Love is the only thing that makes marriage tolerable." Raising herself, she threw off the gravity of her mood and gave a little laugh. "I don't believe I am very original," she said, lightly: "I fancy I have appropriated that remark from some book. Nevertheless, it's true."

CHAPTER IX.

THE house I was now gazetted to, as they say in the army, was of quite a different stamp from Denbigh Court. The stately magnificence and grandeur, the atmosphere of conservatism and decorum, which distinguished the latter abode, had little in common with Hensleigh Grange. The establishment belonged to distant cousins of Mrs. Reggie, a Mr. and Mrs. Hope-Fearing,—people who were leaders of a particularly smart and, it must be owned, rather fast set.

Mrs. Reggie did not exactly approve of Agnes Hope-Fearing, but, as she said, one was tolerably sure of being amused under her roof, and if the fun waxed too fast and furious, why, one could always be called home by judiciously arranged bad news.

Mrs. Hope-Fearing had been a very great heiress, and her husband possessed all the qualifications that fit a man to cope successfully with such an emergency as is furnished by an introduction to incarnate fortune. I had never met him, but as we descended from our carriage at the Hensleigh station he stood upon the platform, scanning the arrivals in search of us.

He was enormously good-looking,—a *blond aux yeux bruns*, eyes which were possessed of a melting, melancholy expression that appealed at once to the imagination and captivated the sympathies at the first glance. He was long and slender of limb, slow and deliberate of movement, and musical of speech. To look at him one would never have dreamed that he was one of the deepest drinkers, hardest riders, and boldest players of all her Majesty's subjects. He looked rather as if he were too indolent for exertion. There was about him a game-not-worth-the-candle aspect that made one wonder at the tales of recklessness that were told of him.

I had been curious to meet him, having heard so many wild stories of which he was the hero, but when the train slowly drew up and Mrs. Reggie, looking from the window, cried, "There is Don!" I could scarcely believe that that quiet, lazy-looking man was indeed the *fin de siècle* Gordon Hope-Fearing of whom I had heard so often and so extravagantly.

As we alighted, Conny, after greeting her cousin, presented him to me. He gave me a long, slow glance as he welcomed me, and I was conscious of hoping my toque was straight, and glad that I had assumed, upon leaving Denbigh Court, the long fur-trimmed wrap which so well fitted my figure and became my style.

"The brougham is here for you ladies," Hope-Fearing said, with his slow, languid drawl. "I thought to drive Reggie in the dog-cart. It's so cold for you ladies, don't you know!"

We fell in with his plan, and Conny and I entered the luxurious brougham. As we started, my companion said to me,—

"Isn't he a prize beauty, Evelyn?"

"Divine!" I said. "I never saw such melting eyes. I should keep him in a glass case if I were your cousin, and label it 'hands off.' He's too beautiful to be at large."

"My dear, Agnes has a method of preserving his allegiance, less

apparent to the world, but quite as effectual as that. Her money is settled entirely upon herself, and Don Hope-Fearing knows too much to trifle with the goose that lays such golden eggs as hers."

"Has he nothing of his own?"

"Not a penny. He had a little property—not much, but enough to keep him in cigars and *boutonnieres*, perhaps. On his marriage he was quixotic enough to make it over to his step-mother, who was very insufficiently provided for."

This little fact, testifying to a generous soul, added to the prepossession I had already begun to feel for my new host, and I occupied myself during the rest of the drive with the possibility of establishing a harmless flirtation with him under his wife's very eyes. It seemed to me that having her directly on the premises would rather give zest to the amusement.

Hensleigh Grange, which Mrs. Hope-Fearing had purchased upon her marriage, made a charming picture as we drove up to it through the long drive-way that intervened between its ivy-clad dimensions and the park gates. As we arrived, a noisy, merry party of men and women were just dismounting from a coach which was drawn up before the wide stone steps; and from their midst our hostess disentangled herself and came forward with a loud cheery greeting.

She was not in the least a pretty woman, but immensely good style. Her face was plain, well-nigh homely, but her figure superb. Few women in England could rival her in that respect, and she gowned herself with exceeding care and with due regard for this one strong point. She had the reputation of being a brilliant conversationalist, and was extremely popular, besides being one of the most thoroughly "up to date" women I have ever known.

"Oh, you good creatures!" she cried, as we crawled out of that awkward vehicle whose low door precludes the possibility of graceful descent. "To take pity on our dulness and come down here!—So glad to see you, Miss Hilliard. Dear! dear! more beautiful than ever!—And you, you good Constance! We need you to tone us down a bit. The girls are positively unmanageable."

We went forward and were presented to such of the others as we did not know, and then, Mrs. Hope-Fearing crying aloud that she had a "*faim de loup*," we sauntered into the hall, where the tea-table was a conspicuous object.

Not the most conspicuous, however, for a bit of furniture considerably more *en évidence* was a sort of antique buffet standing opposite the tea-table, whereon were stationed a number of silver-mounted decanters, various liqueur-flasks, and a silver basket containing lemons. An array of different-sized glasses flanked the liqueur-stands. All the appurtenances were shadowed forth for the compounding of those mixed and potent beverages whose discovery to the world it is the proud privilege of my country to claim.

"Where on earth is Don?" cried our hostess, as we stripped ourselves of gloves and outer garments. "He's really the only man in this barrack fit to mix a cocktail, 'if I do say it as shouldn't.'—Oh, here you are," she continued, as just then her husband and Dering

entered. "Make haste, Don! These good people are chilled to the marrow.—Debby, you go and make the tea, there's a dear. That is, if any one wants it."

Constance Dering moved over toward the tea-table, where a pretty girl, evidently the Debby of Mrs. Hope-Fearing's address, had already ensconced herself behind the gleaming silver equipage. I was about to follow her example and demonstrate that I possessed the courage of my convictions, which did not admit of a hap-hazard indulgence in the delicious but insidious cocktail, when Hope-Fearing's voice from the buffet checked me.

"Where are you going, Miss Hilliard?" he protested, in his languid tones. "Your feet are set in the wrong direction. This way to the *Champs-Élysées*." He held up a dainty *petit-verre*. "This is for you. Nectar for the gods! A most successful *pousse-café*. You won't refuse it?"

One would have thought from his pleading intonation that he was at least beseeching me to refrain from bestowing the *coup-de-grâce*. The appeal in his soft brown eyes was immensely persuasive, and the prismatic effect of the prettiest of all beverages frightfully subversive of good intentions. I changed my course and moved over to where he stood.

"Since you recommend it," I murmured, raising my hand to take the tiny glass which he was holding toward me.

His eyes met mine, and for a moment our glances held one another. Then he drew back his hand, preventing my taking the glass.

"No," he said, "on second thoughts, I don't. Fact is, Miss Hilliard, I don't much care to see women drink, myself,—not all women, at all events. Go over and join Conny at her tea. She's a good soul, is Conny,—steers a safe middle course." Then, with a little nod of dismissal, as a clamor for more haste on his part arose from the others, he called to his wife, "Here, Agnes, I'll send this *pousse* over to you. It's about as you like it, only not quite up to your weight."

Hospitality at Hensleigh Grange was conducted upon the most luxurious scale. Existence there was positively sybaritic, and day was turned into night, and night into day, in a manner that must have caused perplexity to Phœbus Apollo himself.

The breakfast-hour was eleven, though many of the guests did not put in an appearance until luncheon at half-after two. Tea and other liquid refreshments were served between five and six, and dinner at half-after eight.

Dinner was an enormously elaborate affair, and the table most magnificently appointed. The women dressed in actual ball attire, and I never saw such sumptuous clothes. Even Mrs. Reggie brought forth gowns that were a revelation to me, who thought I had gauged her dressing capacity by the comparatively modest display she had made at Denbigh Court.

I must confess that I did put in an awfully good time down at Hensleigh Grange. There was an immense "go" about everything that carried one with it. Even if one were afraid to wander with a man into the conservatories, or stroll, well wrapped in a *sortie-du-bal*,

on the terrace after dinner, for fear of being made the victim of an impassioned outburst of affection, unaccompanied by the interrogatory that alone makes such confessions legitimate, one grew actually enamoured of danger, so exciting was the sport. Then, too, one could scarcely expect these amatory interludes to contain a proposal of marriage, for in many, indeed in the most interesting cases, the man was already appropriated, and the advantages of polygamy have never been properly appreciated by the British government.

My post-prandial companion was very apt to be my host, between whom and myself a very fair understanding had grown up. Hope-Fearing was not one of the irrepressibly enthusiastic sort. The vinous potations of the dinner-table, were they ever so long sustained, produced no effect upon his seasoned temperament. His spirits never appeared in the least exhilarated, nor his usual phlegm disturbed, by any amount of indulgence.

He had never been, Conny told me, particularly addicted to the society of women. Apparently the scanty attention which his wife found leisure to bestow upon him had been all-sufficient to him. But from that first evening, when he had refused me the *pousse-café*, he had shown an evident predilection for my society. He frankly confessed to Conny Dering that he considered me quite the most beautiful girl he had ever seen,—a fact which his languorous eyes often revealed to me.

There is no doubt but that he fascinated me. I was not in love with him then, nor ever have been, but—with one exception—he attracted me more than any other man I have ever met. If he had not been already married and I had never seen—ah, well!

I had little thought of any possible harm befalling either of us as I flirted and coquetted, laughed, walked, talked, and rode, with my host. I simply felt that I was fulfilling my *métier*, and was glad that mamma was not present to prohibit my wasting my time on a detrimental.

Mrs. Hope-Fearing had an absorbing *affaire* of her own on hand,—a flirtation à *outrance* with a wild-looking Pole with flamboyant hair and weak blue eyes. She had little time or attention to spare for others, and probably had become so securely confident of her husband's impregnability that the thought of questioning it never occurred to her.

I never could lie in bed later than nine o'clock. My inherited instincts led me to be "up and doing" in the morning, and I was in the habit of taking a little constitutional while the rest were still making up lost sleep. Hope-Fearing discovered this eccentric conduct, and one morning I was joined by him as I was returning from a charmingly invigorating stroll.

"Anything up?" I asked, pretending surprise at his early appearance.

"Yes, all the world," he replied, his eyes looking meaningly into mine. "You and I."

"A little hard on Mrs. Hope-Fearing, is it not?" I asked, lifting my brows.

He gave an impatient kick to a bit of gravel. "Oh, I did not mean her world," he replied, with a touch of annoyance in his voice.

"Let us not think of them just now. Isn't it fine out here? What a wise little woman you are to steal a march on the others this way! No wonder your skin is like peaches and cream."

Now, when a man metaphorically puts his wife out of the world for the sake of another woman, and then begins to comment upon the other woman's charms, one of two things must happen: either the woman must assume a repellent manner and forbid further communication, or else she must show a just appreciation of the flattering notice bestowed upon her. If she is an "up to date" woman she will experience a lively gratitude for the interest she has awakened, and judiciously encourage her admirer by a fetching glance from under her long lashes. Long lashes are a *sine quâ non*; without them no glance can be really effective. I tried this method with Hope-Fearing, with such marked success that I unhesitatingly recommend it to others in a like situation.

"You think I am flattering you," he cried, protestingly. "But, by Jove! I'm not, Miss Hilliard." And he then went on piling up encomiums of my beauty until even I felt surfeited.

"There! there! there!" I cried, placing my hands over my ears. "Don't you know I loathe flattery?"

He smiled incredulously.

"You are a woman," he said. "Pardon my saying I think you labor under a misapprehension of your own feelings." I laughed, but his face grew grave. Apparently he was not in a jesting humor.

"Miss Hilliard," he began, after we had walked on a little in silence, "when is your time up here?"

"On Friday," I said,—this being Tuesday.

"Can't you extend it?"

"Impossible!" I replied. "I am due then at the Kents', and after that at the Somerbys', and so on. Later mamma and I are to run over to Paris for an interview with my milliner."

Gloom was on his brow, and the melancholy had deepened several degrees in his eyes.

"What a beastly bore it's going to be here without you! I know the Somerbys. Would you mind if I got them to ask me there while you are putting in your time?"

"Oh, no," I said. "I should be charmed. But Mrs. Hope-Fearing?—would she care to go to them? You know they are scarcely of her *monde*: I fancy they are a bit slow for her."

"Oh, she wouldn't go. I didn't mean to include her. We were going to the Denzils' about that time, and I can get out of it some way. I can work the jealous racket—I've done that before; tell her the Pole is making me unhappy, etc. That will please her and make her all the more furious after him. I shall pretend to sulk off to Somerby's, and she will ask the Denzils to fill my place with the ruddy-tressed Pole. It's a good dodge, and always works."

There was not much illusion left in my mind regarding Hope-Fearing's sentiments toward his wife. Few men, after marriage, speak of the woman they love as "she." The pronoun always in such cases implies a certain weariness of the conjugal yoke.

That night, as we were about to sit down to cards (cards meaning poker), Conny came up to me.

"Don't you want to let those 'devil's picture-books' alone for once in a way, Evelyn?" she asked. "Don is awfully fond of music, and wants to hear you sing. It's a sort of passion with him, music is, and I have promised you shall gratify it to-night."

"Oh, dear! Then he is probably critical, and I am afraid to sing before him. Besides, I can't sing here." I made a slight motion with my head toward the laughing, noisy groups who were taking their places at the card-tables.

"I should think not, indeed!" she replied, with a shrug of disgust. "We will go into the morning-room, just he, you, and I, and be as snug as possible. As for criticism, your masters have placed you above that."

I good-naturedly yielded to her request, and excused myself to the others, who quickly closed in around my vacated place, and Conny and I proceeded on our way to join Hope-Fearing. He was sitting at the piano, as we entered, singing, in a low but exceedingly rich, full voice, a beautiful little French love-song. There was passion in every note of the lovely *chanson*, and as we paused, unperceived, in the door-way, Conny whispered to me,—

"Isn't it beautiful? Evelyn, there are unsuspected depths in that man's apparently languid nature, I believe. My dear, be careful! It is sometimes dangerous pastime to trouble such depths."

He finished, and we went forward. He rose at once, but had not time fully to replace the mask of indifference upon his features, which were still flushed with feeling; but his manner was as undisturbed as usual.

"It is very good of you to come," he said. "Hope it wasn't a bore?"

"Not at all," I returned, politely; "but you may find it such. What shall I sing? My voice, you know, is nothing; almost as still and small as that of conscience."

He made some courteous protest against my self-depreciation, and allowed me to make my own selection. In my *répertoire* I have several compositions which I consider especially fetching if sung to married adorers. They are replete with tender regret, vague possibilities, reflections upon Kismet, and suggestions as to the ideal compatibility that would have been consequent upon my union with that particular Benedict at whom the song is directed; they are things of sighs and moans, of lament and protest, with the never-varying "it might have been" theme running throughout all.

I sang a couple of light little English ballads first, and then chose the most lugubrious of these. A servant came with a message to Conny as I was in the midst of it, obliging her to leave the room, so that when I finished my wail against Fate, Hope-Fearing and I were quite alone. As I paused, hearing no word of commendation from him, I turned, with some trifling remark on my lips in reference to Mrs. Reggie's defection, when the look in his eyes quite paralyzed my tongue. He had risen from his seat, and was standing just behind me,

all the languor and indifference driven from his face by a passion there was no mistaking.

"My God!" he ejaculated in a low, suppressed tone as I confronted him. "What do you mean by singing like that? Have you ever known the heart-break you have put into that song? Do you know it now? Say, Evelyn, my darling, do you know it now?"

He was close beside me, and had taken my hands in his. His beautiful eyes were lighted by a look I had never dreamed them capable of taking on. His handsome features, so near my own, were fairly aglow, and his voice was quivering with deep feeling. The very perfection of his physical beauty told upon me, and I was nearer loving him at that moment than he has ever known.

The soft frou-frou of an approaching gown recalled us to the conventionalities, and perhaps saved me from involving myself in an entanglement. He muttered an ejaculation and dropped my hands, while I turned again to the piano and, with trembling fingers, rattled off a waltz of Chaminade's.

I am older now, and have acquired by experience the ability to cope with such emergencies, but at that time I was a bit flustered, and it was not until I was thinking it over in my dressing-room that I fully realized what a distinct tribute to my powers it was to arouse such depth of feeling in a man of Hope-Fearing's proverbial impracticability.

The next day I did all that I could to avoid my host. There were one or two men who had been on the outlook for a let-up in my flirtation with him to get in a little work themselves, and these I encouraged, to the evident anger and disgust of Hope-Fearing.

The men at Hensleigh Grange were more fond of sport than had been the guests at Denbigh Court, and we women were left pretty well to our own devices during the daytime. Occasionally, those who were energetic enough went out with the men's luncheon, and joined them at the informal, *al fresco* meal. But as a usual thing we were almost wholly thrown on our own resources until it was time to "liquor up," as a very bold and *émancipée* young countrywoman of mine, who was also a guest at the Grange, used to speak of that moist interval before the dressing-bell.

Conny had begged me to forbid her cousin following me to the Somerbys', and, seeing how deeply she had taken the matter to heart, I had consented to do so; but as, up to Thursday night, I had not had an opportunity, or had not desired to force an occasion, of seeing him alone, I thought I should be obliged to write him in regard to it.

But as I was standing that night on the outskirts of a group of men and women who were trying to persuade my countrywoman to indulge them with a bit of skirt-dancing,—in which art she modestly declared herself to be "a daisy,"—Hope-Fearing joined me. I saw immediately that he had been drinking heavily, although only a close observer and one familiar with him would have detected it.

"Miss Hilliard," he said, "come outside with me, will you?"

I pretended to shiver. "Too cold!" I replied. "*Mousseline de soie* is terribly thin."

"But I'll get your wraps from your maid."

"And these!" I said, thrusting forth a small foot shod with the thinnest kid *chaussure*.

"A pair of party-boots will make those all right. You must come," he continued, more eagerly. "Do me this favor, Miss Hilliard. You can't care to stay here and see this exhibition. Do humor me for once—you have been so cruel to me lately. I want to apologize to you for the other night."

I was swayed by the beauty of his eyes and the magic of his voice, and consented.

When he rejoined me in the hall—whither I went to await his reappearance with my wraps—I saw that he had brought, instead of the garment I expected, a long, fur-lined coat of his own. In this he insisted, notwithstanding my objections, that I should allow him to wrap me. About my head I wound the soft, yellow, Liberty scarf that Julie had given him, and, having drawn the warm party-boots over my thin slippers, I nodded to him that I was ready, and we stole quietly out of the broad portal, like two culprits, and gained the lovely, moonlit terrace.

CHAPTER X.

THE night was beautiful: not as cold as I had expected, but clear and still. Not a sound was audible of the brilliant, glowing life within that gorgeous abode. The unimpassioned calm of nature must have fallen like a rebuke upon my companion's excited condition, for, save that he took my hand and laid it upon his arm, holding it there with a tender but firm clasp, he gave no further vent to his feelings for some moments, but seemed content just to pace slowly up and down, up and down, in unbroken silence.

After a little he made a trifling remark, almost startling in its simplicity:

"Our steps suit well,—don't they?"

I assented. His question scarcely fulfilled my expectations, and sounded rather flat. After another pause:

"Miss Hilliard, you have been very cruel to me this last day or two."

I felt that something in the way of a reply was expected of me, and ejaculated "I?" inanely.

"Yes, you," he continued. "I suppose I deserved it for the way in which I spoke to you the other night, but—my God! what you have made me suffer for it!" The drawl had quite disappeared from his voice, and it sounded harsh and rough.

I thought to impose some restraint on him by withdrawing my hand from his arm, but he only tightened his grip of it.

"Don't!" he said; "let it lie there. I shan't see you again for so long,—not for ten days, at least. Great God! what a length of time to get through!"

I felt that this was my opportunity, and seized it.

"Mr. Hope-Fearing," I said, with as indifferent a voice as I could

command, "I have been considering the subject of your going down to the Somerby's, and would really prefer that you should not do so."

"What!" he exclaimed; "you do not wish to meet me there?"

"No," I replied; "I think it better not."

"And why not?" he asked, sneeringly. "On account of the proprieties, perhaps. I thought it was the thing to disregard the proprieties, nowadays." Then, with a complete change of manner: "Evelyn, don't say I may not go; I am living on the mere thought of meeting you there."

"But I must say so," I replied; "and, furthermore, I must forbid your talking to me in this manner. If you cannot converse on indifferent matters I must ask you to take me back to the house."

It seemed to me that this flirtation was going a little beyond bounds, but evidently my threat checked him, for he said nothing for some moments; then, in a low tone,—

"Evelyn," he asked, "if I had not been a married man could you have loved me?"

The moon was getting in its work on my brain, and I was willing to indulge in a little properly restrained sentiment.

"Perhaps," I said, with a gentle sigh. "Who can tell?"

"And being married there is no hope for me?" gloomily.

"I should say not," I replied. "Mrs. Hope-Fearing seems in tolerably robust health."

"How can you jest?" he cried, angrily. "Great heaven! you women have no feeling, I honestly believe; you toy and trifle with a man, smile on, and encourage him with your pretty, gracious ways, tempt his senses, cajole his heart, play fast-and-loose with his most sacred feelings; and then, when you have made him a thing of passion and impulse, ridiculous in his own sight and that of the world, when you have banished his peace of mind, robbed him of his self-respect, and frenzied him by your caprices, you look coldly and wonderingly at him if he transgress the bounds of self-control."

He stopped short, and suddenly raising his hands placed them on either side of my head and turned it backward, letting the moonlight flood it.

"Married or not, I love you!" he cried, hotly. "I love your beautiful hair, your lovely eyes, your dainty lips, your creamy cheeks. Evelyn, Evelyn! I love every inch of you, body and soul—body and soul, God help me!" One by one, as he enumerated my charms he laid a passionate kiss upon each, and, as I finally tore myself from his embrace, I was fairly quivering with anger.

"How dare you!" I cried, indignantly. "You have abominably insulted me, and I wish never to see you again. You have taken a most unpardonable liberty, and I will never forgive you."

But I did. He turned upon me a face so miserable, so white and ashamed, that I did forgive him, even before he spoke.

"You are right," he said, with abject humiliation. "I have no claim upon your leniency. I have made a brute of myself, and you will never look at me again. I cannot ask your pardon, you would

not grant it; nor can I blame you. But I was tempted. My God! I was tempted!"

And I knew it. I knew that deliberately and with malice pre-pense I had sought to win this man and drag him captive at my chariot-wheels. Somehow the reflection was not a very ennobling one to my self-consciousness. He had left me, and was standing a few paces distant, with his back turned to me, looking vaguely off into the night. I felt compassion for his mortification and remorse, and, after a short pause, went forward and accosted him.

"I retract what I said a few moments ago," I began, gently, but with no trace of coquetry in my voice. "I have no right to withhold my pardon from you, for I am not altogether blameless in this affair. You did attract me, and I have flirted with you; but so have I done with many men without receiving such summary punishment as you have inflicted upon me. Inasmuch as I am also at fault, I forgive you. Perhaps, indeed, I should also ask of you a similar grace. It will not be necessary for me to repeat my request that you do not go to the Somerbys'?"

He shook his head.

"Then good-night," I said,—“and good-by. You will probably be out shooting to-morrow when I leave, and I shall not, therefore, see you again.”

His face looked sad and white in the pale moonlight.

"It shall be as you wish," he said. "I have forfeited the right to protest."

"Then good-by." I gave him my hand, and he held it for a couple of seconds in his, then dropped it without a word, and I passed on into the house and gained my own room, sending Julie down with a line to my hostess apologizing for my absence on the plea of indisposition. The next day I left the Grange without again encountering its master.

But this was not the end of the affair. I finished out my round of visits; mamma and I fulfilled our plan of crossing the Channel and spending a couple of weeks in Paris and the same length of time in Rome, where I was charmingly received among the English and American colonies, and then returned to London a little in advance of the season, which I was anticipating with ill-restrained eagerness.

Lady Emily was again settled in Belgrave Square, and from her I learned several pieces of news: namely, that Lord Denbigh had gone off again on one of his interminable journeys, that Sir Robby's engagement to Sibyl McCarthy was to be announced as soon as the season was fairly inaugurated, and that Derrington had written that his passage home was taken for the twentieth of May.

One afternoon Conny called for me to drive with her, and as we were slowly bowling through the Park—where plenty of room attested the fact that the world had not yet returned to London—we came upon Don Hope-Fearing strolling along in an aimless, indifferent sort of manner. The moment he caught sight of us he stopped, evidently expecting we would draw up and allow him to speak to us. I knew that this was the last thing Conny would desire to do, but the sight of

the man's charming face aroused in me a longing to renew my acquaintance with him.

"Of course you will stop!" I suggested quickly to my companion.

"Why should we?" she asked. "What is the use of raking over dead ashes?"

"What harm is there, if the ashes *are* dead? Besides, don't you think it likely that we shall meet some time during the season? I promise absolute discretion. Do stop, Conny. The poor fellow looks so anxious."

"So ill, you mean," she said, yielding finally, and giving her order to the footman.—"Why, Don! So glad to see you, my dear boy!"

He did look ill, frightfully so. I was a little startled myself, and I fancy that it was his wan appearance that touched Conny into asking him back to tea with us. He assented eagerly, and when we reached Conny's pretty, characteristic little abode we found Hope-Fearing already there, his brougham having anticipated us by several minutes.

While Conny was up-stairs donning her tea-gown,—for it was her day, and hers was a popular house,—Hope-Fearing, gazing at me as if his great brown eyes would devour me, said, in a calm, friendly tone,—

"You are looking well, Miss Hilliard."

"Thank you; I am in superb health."

"Am I to be permitted to call upon you?"

"I see no reason why you should not," I replied; for I was beginning to feel again the half-forgotten spell of his influence, and really desired to number him among my friends. "Mamma is at home on Mondays."

His thin face quite lighted up, and his "thank you" sounded very warm and heartfelt.

Thus it was that the intimacy between us renewed itself. It was not long before our names began to be coupled together. People lifted their brows and shrugged their shoulders when we were mentioned, and Conny and I nearly came to open warfare over the subject.

By the time the season was well advanced, London fairly rang with stories—wild and improbable, and, needless to say, false—concerning our intimacy, and I became the most popular, the most widely talked-of, of society women. It is true that Lady Emily withdrew Fifi somewhat from association with me, and that some of the more conservative leaders of society contented themselves with sending me, this year, cards to only their more formal functions; but as a general thing what people chose to consider a serious *affaire*, harmless and innocent though it was, only added a feather in my cap and made me more widely sought as a social lion.

Poor mamma was in a quandary! Hope-Fearing had, from the first, enlisted her liking by his beauty and charming manners. As people began to talk, she speculated as to what effect such gossip might have upon my prospects. When Lady Emily paid her a special visit for the purpose of exposing to her the scandal that was being bruited about concerning me, she felt obliged to remonstrate with me. But

both she and I had a little outgrown Lady Emily by this time, and mamma, flushed with the delight of my triumph, was wont to speak somewhat slightly of the conservatism which marked our former patroness's social ideas.

The constantly increasing number of cards which were sent and left for me, the solicitude with which my presence at certain affairs was besought, and the continual stream of compliment and flattery that was poured into mamma's ears regarding my brilliant career, quite set her scruples at rest, and led her to content herself with sundry gently-uttered admonitions as to prudence and propriety.

Notwithstanding her profound disapproval of my conduct, Constance Dering maintained her intimacy with me. I think the good creature was apprehensive that if my old friends did not rally closely about me I should float fairly beyond their reach and be lost in that fast and furious vortex of ultra-fashionable London life.

By the first of June I began to weary somewhat of Hope-Fearing's society. His manner was growing more *exigeant*, and a certain impatience of our merely friendly relations was beginning to manifest itself. He had lost for me that fascination which had not been rooted in any deeper feeling, and I began to revolve in my mind a plan of escape. I feared an open rupture with him, because I knew that beneath the crust of apparently simple friendliness there smouldered a terrible fire, ready, at a word from me, to burst through and scorch my self-complacency with burning words of reproach and entreaty.

After much thought, I evolved an idea which I was not long in carrying out. I knew that Lady Denbigh was down at Denbigh Court alone, and I decided to write and ask her to let me spend a week with her in its quiet and seclusion. This I did, and received a cordial reply from her, welcoming me to her solitude. I immediately put my plan into execution, and charged mamma not to reveal my destination to a living soul.

On my way to the station I posted a letter to Hope-Fearing, telling him I was leaving town for a week, and that I was forced by the unpleasant gossip that was in circulation to ask him to suspend, for the future, his visits to me. Hereafter it would be impossible for me to receive him, and I should be glad if, before my return, he could find it convenient to take a little run over to the Continent or elsewhere, until society had ceased associating our names together. I frankly told him that gossip and slander had made me uncomfortable, and had driven me to this course, and that I deeply regretted losing his companionship, etc., etc.

Constance Dering had accused me of being selfish, and, as I wrote that note, for the first time the full truth of her accusation was brought home to me. I shivered a little as I thought of the look which would come into Hope-Fearing's eyes as he read it. Had I indeed been cruel, heartless, selfish? Had I made a plaything of his heart simply for my own careless amusement? This was the crime with which Conny had charged me, and I had professed disbelief in my power to wreck a man's life,—to bring lasting injury upon him.

And now! Well, now, as I took that long, solitary journey down

to Denbigh Court, I had time to pause and reflect, to question myself a little closely as to the possible result of my flippant conduct; and by the time I reached the Court and felt Lady Denbigh's welcoming kiss upon my cheek, I had wrought myself up into such a condition of hysterical self-reproach that her comfortable motherly greeting nearly proved too much for me.

A sudden resolve came to me while she and I sat at dinner, we two alone, in the large, splendid room. It was that I would make a clean breast of the whole matter to my hostess, whom I would make my mother-confessor. As we were taking our coffee, in the long June twilight, out on the broad veranda upon which the small drawing-room opened by long French windows, Lady Denbigh said to me,—

"Did you know Derrington is down at the Castle?"

"Derrington!" I ejaculated. "When did he arrive?"

"Only yesterday, I think. I fancy he came directly down here. He has a friend with him, Henshaw (the steward) says."

"Oh! I hope he will not learn I am here. I did think I should have a little peace." My sigh was very genuine. Lady Denbigh smiled, and I added, impulsively, "Dear Lady Denbigh, do you know why I ran away from London in the very height of the season?"

"Over-fatigued, I fancied: was it not so?"

I concluded from her manner that she was aware that some deeper motive had influenced my conduct, but she was too courteous to probe the reason that had made me her guest.

"Not quite that," I said. "I fear I love gayety too well ever to be really weary of it." (I have changed since then, I fancy. Certainly society often palls upon me now.) "May I bring out that little stool and sit quite close to you while I tell you a short and not very pretty story?"

Of course she assented, and, seating myself at her feet, I told my tale. When I finished, Lady Denbigh leaned forward and took my hand.

"My dear," she said, kindly, but with unmistakable disapproval, "this is not a nice thing that you have done."

"I know it," I admitted, penitently. "But it never seemed to me so intolerable before."

It is needless for me to recapitulate the little sermon that Lady Denbigh read me. It was moral and wholesome, and delivered with excellent tact that sent it forcibly home to me. She admitted that she had heard rumors that filled her with disquietude, but that she felt her estimate of me could not be so far out of plumb as to admit of my going to any really improper lengths with Hope-Fearing. She was charming, reasonable, and convincing in her cautiously-worded rebuke and advice to me, and I could not help feeling how different was her view of my conduct, and the ground upon which she based her remonstrance, from mamma's.

The next afternoon, after luncheon, I set out for a long walk. Lady Denbigh, feeling perhaps that self-communion might give added effect to her words, allowed me to dispose of myself as I would, unshackled by her. I strolled on and on, feeling indeed more of a girl and lighter

of heart than I had since I made my first courtesy to her gracious Majesty. I had gone some distance before I realized that I was growing warm and tired and intolerably thirsty. Perhaps I should not have been so conscious of this latter condition but for the sudden vision of a delicious, babbling little brook almost at my feet: I felt that have some of that clear, crystal fluid I must and would.

I had often heard of persons drinking out of the crowns of their hats, and at once took mine off to see if it would answer the purpose. It was a very dainty French affair of white Leghorn, surmounted by a charming wreath of lilacs with very stiff and self-assertive bows of exquisite ribbon standing forbiddingly up in the back. These possessed such a defiant, touch-me-not appearance that I immediately relinquished all idea of making use of the article they defended. With unwonted respect I deposited the hat upon the ground, at a safe distance from the brook, and then recollected that I could form a cup of my hands: I had often read of girls doing so in novels.

I stripped off my long *gants de Suède*, and, going forward, knelt cautiously down by the side of the water. Placing the lower edges of my palms together, I leaned over, meaning with this improvised cup to gather up some fragments of the radiant mirror whose calm placidity my onslaught would shatter.

I must have poised myself badly, however, for as I bent forward I lost my balance, and quickly threw out one hand to save myself from falling into the brook. I probably gave my wrist a sudden twist as I made the involuntary movement, for as I clutched the earth and threw the weight of my body upon this hand I felt a sudden intolerable twinge shoot up my arm with an agony that forced a cry of pain from my lips. I had sprained my wrist.

Almost simultaneously with my scream of distress a man emerged from the shadow of a tree and approached me. I was too deeply engaged with my own forlorn condition even to glance at him, for my wrist was already beginning to swell and to turn purple, and the pain from it was becoming most intense. As he came up to me, however, I turned and addressed him:

"I have sprain——" I got no further. The man who stood before me with a gladness in his eyes which no amount of endeavor on his part to suppress could wholly crush out, and no solicitude for my suffering, however deep, could wholly dim, was the man who had parted from me in anger a year ago, and whose face, during all the dissipations of those wildly-exciting twelve months, had never been absent from my memory.

"Paul!" I stammered, scarcely believing my own eyesight. Then I grew embarrassed, for I remembered how we had parted; but a sudden accession of pain made me wince, despite my joy at seeing him.

"Yes; it is I," he said, gravely. And then, as if we had parted only the day before, "You have sprained your wrist, I fear: may I look at it?"

His matter-of-fact tone set me at once at ease, and I put forward my disfigured member for his inspection. I think my pulse must have

beaten a little irregularly as I felt his touch upon it. Surely, of all unlikely things to happen, this was the last I could have anticipated.

"Yes, it looks rather a bad sprain," he said, still in that serious, matter-of-fact voice. "I will bind it up with my handkerchief, if you will allow me, until you can get home. You are staying in the neighborhood?"

"At Denbigh Court, about three miles from here, I should say," I replied, feeling that I was acting a part in a dream from which I expected suddenly to awaken to the disappointing realization that those gentle, firm touches upon my wrist, those serious, kindly glances, and that friendly address, had all been but the charming illusion of a vision.

So possessed was I with this idea that, as he was winding his handkerchief, wet with the cool spring-water, about my swollen wrist, I yielded to a sudden childish impulse and laid my disengaged hand for an instant upon his. There must have been an unconscious tenderness in my touch which gave it the nature of a caress, for the hot color flashed for a moment all over his rather stern, immobile face, and he lifted a pair of somewhat startled eyes to mine with an inquiring glance. His blush was contagious, and I felt the blood crimson my own face as I hastily explained my singular action.

"I wanted to see if you were real flesh and blood," I said, with an abashed, apologetic smile.

His features relaxed, and he laughed as in the olden time when some of my childish pranks had amused him.

"What a child you still are, Evelyn!" he said, with evident amusement. "I should think the pain from your wrist might convince you of the reality of this occasion."

I looked at him as he stood there before me, the only man whose opinion I had ever valued, and yet the only man who had dared openly to own that that opinion was unfavorable to me. A medium-sized, strong, though slight, man, with a face indifferently well-favored. A man who would be pretty sure to pass unnoted in a crowd; and yet whom having once held as a friend one would make many a sacrifice rather than lose.

A sudden passionate wave of longing to reinstate myself in his good graces, to recover that interest which I knew myself to have once possessed, swept over me, and I determined to make at least an effort at rehabilitation. Of what use to me were all the charms and graces, the beauty and fascination, with which I had been accredited, if they could not win back to me this the one man in all the world in whose eyes I desired to stand fair!

As he concluded his remark, I raised my eyes and looked him fully in the face, while in a low tone, tremulous with feeling, I murmured,—

"There are joys which force even the bitterest pain out of sight;" then, with a wistful expression in my eyes and voice,—*"Paul,"* I continued, still lower, *"am I yet forgiven for that unfeeling speech?"*

It is somewhat difficult for a man engaged as he was, in binding up a woman's injured wrist, to declare himself impervious to her self-

humiliation and to assert himself her enemy. I had well availed myself of this opportunity, and had taken excellent advantage of his helplessness. His hitherto steady fingers seemed to bungle a bit in his occupation while I was speaking, and for a moment or two after I concluded he said nothing.

Then, as he deftly fastened the end of the handkerchief in place with a pin and prepared to pull the sleeve down over my round white arm from which it had been pushed back, I, feeling that he might escape me if removed from my immediate presence, forgot my pride and maidenly modesty sufficiently to lay my fingers again upon his and detain them in an appealing clasp. It was strange that I seemed to feel no pride where he was concerned. I was willing to humble myself even to the dust to gain his approval.

"Paul! Paul!" I cried, beseechingly, "how unyielding you are! How can you be so cruel to me?"

He had drawn away his hand quickly, as if my touch stung him, and, as if in excuse for such apparent cowardice, had stooped to recover my hat from its mossy bed. As he rose again to an upright position I could see that, try as he would to conceal it, he was much agitated, though he succeeded marvellously in controlling his voice as he said, significantly,—

"Perhaps from a selfish effort to be kind to myself. Derrington tells me it does not fare well with men who are ambitious of becoming your friends."

I began to feel discouraged. The pain from my wrist was breaking my spirit, and notwithstanding Paul's agitation he seemed too much master of himself, too strong in his unyielding purpose, to be conquered by my coquetries. I felt disappointed, hurt, and wounded, and unwonted tears sprang to my eyes. I bit my lip and drew a long breath.

"Very well," I said; "I can do no more. I have humbled myself sufficiently, I think. I believe a woman seldom meets with such discourtesy." Then, raising my wet eyes with well-planned effect, I motioned to the hat he was still holding. "Will you be good enough to put it on for me? I fear I cannot manage it with one hand."

He was caught in a trap. It was impossible for him to refuse so simple a request as that, for I could not well walk back the intervening distance to Denbigh Court bareheaded, and I really could not fasten the hat into place unaided. He hesitated an instant, and, deeply moved though I was, I nearly burst into an hysterical fit of laughter over his expression of blank perplexity; then he succumbed to the inevitable. He looked at the lilac-crowned hat, and then at the long, brilliant-encrusted dagger I held out to him.

"Of course," he responded, slowly, with frigid politeness, "but—ah—would you be kind enough to tell me which is the front?"

I showed him the position the hat was supposed to occupy, and he came toward me holding it gingerly between his hands. The dagger he had thrust into his pocket for future reference. I bent my head to him, and, with as much care and deliberation as if the fate of nations hung upon its proper adjustment, he placed the dainty fabrication upon

my chestnut locks ; then, stepping back a pace, he said, with an anxious frown upon his brow,—

"Please look up : I don't know if it is straight."

I did as he bade me, and turned my dewy eyes upon him, with a sad, pathetic glance quite out of keeping with the situation. He raised his hand and stroked his dark moustache with a movement natural to him when disturbed or perplexed, then nodded his head.

"Yes, it is all right, I think."

"But you have not pinned it," I suggested, in a timid voice. "It will not stay."

"Oh!" He took out the long, dangerous-looking pin and regarded it with absolute dismay. "I can't attempt to run this thing into your head," he muttered, angrily. "I wouldn't risk it."

"It is very easy," I hazarded, still with downcast lids. "Please try. I could not walk a step without losing my hat if it were not fastened on. See! I will put it in place if you will run it through."

Thus urged, he complied, and I held the point of the pin against that particular place in the crown where it would best fulfil its mission. Every one knows that if there is one action in this world almost impossible of accomplishment, it is that of pinning a hat on another's head. I knew this, and from his unwillingness to attempt it I fancy Paul also suspected it. But I did not care if I did suffer a bit at his hands. I would submit to anything to prolong this interview.

Again he came quite close to me and laid his large masculine hand heavily and firmly on the side of the hat opposite that in which I had stuck the pin. Then, clinching his teeth tight together, he seized the dagger and gave it a gentle push. Of course the straw resisted such a futile effort.

"Harder," I said. He made an imperceptibly stronger attempt ; still the straw balked him.

"Oh, much harder," I begged ; and this time with a really vigorous shove he drove the sharp pin through the hat and apparently into my head. I uttered a cry of pain, and he started and looked at me in affright.

"I have hurt you?" he cried, in alarm.

"You have," I said, with deep feeling, again raising my tear-laden eyes to his perturbed countenance. "You have, Paul,—awfully."

"What shall I do?" he asked, in deep distress. "Shall I take it out again?"

"Please," I begged, with trembling lip.

He again placed his hands on the hat, but before he had fairly extracted the pin, which was really marvellously well placed, I slowly leaned back my head and looked into his anxious face with eyes brimming over with laughter. He was so surprised that he forgot to lower his hands, or perhaps he feared to do so, lest the hat, released from his hold, should fall to the ground.

"Paul," I said, my voice quivering with suppressed laughter,—for the situation was really very funny, and I could not but be amused to think how easily I had tricked him,—“I did not mean that it was the pin that hurt me—that is very nice, thank you : I thought it was the

thorn in your wicked speech to me that you saw rankling in my heart and offered to extract: won't you please do it now?"

My blandishments had at last prevailed. I perceived by the change in his face that, strong man as he fancied himself, I had conquered his will. With a sensation of rare exultation I saw his gray eyes give back tenderness to mine, the severity of his features relax beneath the glowing spell of my upturned face. With a sudden involuntary cry, as of one caught in the toils, he dropped his arms until they fell about my figure, drawing me to him with a quick, powerful gesture. Bending his face to mine, he pressed upon my willing lips one, two, three, swift passionate kisses, and then, pushing me suddenly from him, turned abruptly away and strode out of sight through the thick woods.

I stood for an instant like one in a trance, caring not even that he had gone from me; my veins throbbing like mad, my heart beating in quick, almost audible, pulsations against my breast. I laughed aloud, I could not help it, so exultant was I in this proof I had gained, this confession I had forced, from Paul Sturgis.

I had food enough for thought as I strolled homeward. I was glad to be alone; I was glad I had sprained my wrist. I cared not for the agony of pain it was causing me. I carried with me a memory that was a panacea for every ill or ailment that could possibly afflict me.

Lady Denbigh was waiting to give me tea when I arrived at the Court. She was much distressed at my accident, and at once despatched a groom for a surgeon. While we were awaiting his coming she disclosed a bit of news to me.

"Derry has been over here," she said. "He was terribly disappointed at missing you."

"He knew I was here, then?"

"Not till I told him. He *has* brought a gentleman home with him; an American, and a friend of yours, Evelyn,—Mr. Sturgis."

"Yes, I met him in the wood," I said, with assumed nonchalance: "he bound up my arm for me."

CHAPTER XI.

THE following day Derrington paid another visit to the Court, bringing me a few lines from Paul.

"Sturgis had a business engagement in London to-day," Lord Derrington explained, "and I was to have gone up with him, but I did so awfully want to see you again that I let him go alone."

Paul's note was brief, but filled with delicious possibilities. It ran thus:

"I am obliged to go to London for a couple of days on important business. When I return to Sheraton I must ask you to grant me an interview; I have something to say to you which I can no longer defer." It was signed very simply, "Yours faithfully, Paul Sturgis."

The two days dragged slowly by. On the afternoon of the third I made as charming a toilette as the narrow limits of the slender wardrobe I had brought with me permitted, and, having betrayed to Lady

Denbigh just a sufficient suggestion of my anticipated happiness to insure a fair field when Paul should present himself, I established myself in a cosy corner of the dainty morning-room which Lady Denbigh and I preferred to the more stately apartments.

It was in vain that I tried to read. My eyes turned constantly toward the long French windows that commanded the approach to the Court. My frequent glances were finally rewarded by the vision of Derrington, who came in and had a cup of tea with us. He informed me that Paul had not yet returned, and that he had received a note from him that morning saying that he had changed his plans somewhat and would let Derrington know when they were definitely arranged.

Derrington soon took his leave, being very busy with matters connected with his great estate, which his long absence had left to accumulate.

The evening mail brought me a letter from Paul. There was not a turn of handwriting, a punctuation-mark, or a blank space in that whole letter which even now, after the lapse of so many, many months, I cannot perfectly recall.

Oh, Paul Sturgis! You did me bitter harm by that letter! Love for you had softened my nature into wax that might have been easily moulded by your magic touch into any shape your fancy would have created. I would have been plastic in your hands. My life had not been modelled on the lines you consider fitting for the shaping of a true and noble woman; but was mine the fault? Is it the fault of any young girl, whose sole influence has been that of a calculating, worldly mother, if the bough grow the way the twig is bent? What is to be expected of a woman-child reared in the artificiality of a conventional social training, taught, by example as well as by precept, to consider the capture of men, the pursuit of wealth and position, her chief business in life? Can one wonder if she strain every nerve to attain distinction in her calling; if her simple brain, predisposed to levity, show scant consideration of the serious consequences contingent upon success in her special line?

This was the letter he wrote me:

"MY DEAR MISS HILLIARD,—

"I send a few lines to you in order that you may not expect me to claim the interview which I requested. What the object of that interview was to be it is needless for me to state, as it referred to a matter which will claim, hereafter, no more of my attention than it probably has already claimed of yours. I feel that my action the other day requires no apology; it was, doubtless, simply the result you were endeavoring to provoke by conduct which, in a woman of less assured standing, I should denominate by a term that I scruple to apply to this occasion, amply as I feel it warrants it. You can scarcely wonder as to the cause of my changed course of action: gossip is loud-voiced and many-tongued in London. My God! that you should have fallen so low!

"PAUL STURGIS."

Lady Denbigh came into the room while I was still holding that terrible piece of writing in my limp fingers. At a glance she saw that I had sustained a shock. All the blood in my body seemed to have turned to ice, and my face must have borne the hue of death upon it. She came at once to me and knelt beside my chair, letting her kindly eyes rest searchingly upon my face.

"My dear," she said, with sweet, sympathetic interest there was no resisting, "you have had bad news?"

I could not reply: my heart seemed to have risen into my throat and was choking me. I pressed the letter into her hands. I cared not at that moment who should know the hurt I had sustained. My pride was laid low in the dust. Paul had thought that my bearing toward him was my customary attitude toward all men. He had not divined the inciting causes that had led me to stoop from the proud heights of assured social success, to transgress the bounds of maidenly modesty, in order to conquer his stubborn heart. He had failed to perceive the love that had for long years lain latent in my breast; the actual terror lest he should again escape without giving me a chance to vindicate myself; the impulse to win by wiles what I could not force by expostulation.

I knew but too well the nature of the gossip he had heard in town. Had I been less preoccupied with anticipations of my coming happiness I might have foreboded the result of his journey thither. Was not all London ringing with stories, false and malicious it is true, but nevertheless damaging and slanderous, of my intimacy with Gordon Hope-Fearing? Oh, fool! fool that I had been to let his ears be poisoned by such rumors before I had explained to him the true and simple version of the matter. He might have blamed me for levity and imprudence, for cruelty and thoughtlessness; but never would he have held me convicted of the terrible charge implied by every word of his letter. And face to face with him, should I not have known how to extenuate my flippant conduct? Eye to eye, and heart to heart, could I not have won from him forgiveness for the past and forbearance for the future? Oh, Paul! Paul!

Lady Denbigh read the letter, probably reading between the lines much that was unwritten.

"Cruel!" I heard her murmur, as she finished it. "Evelyn, dear, you love this man?"

"Oh! I did, I did!" I cried, with a sudden outburst of feeling. "Lady Denbigh, I have loved him all my life. Heaven help me!"

Her kind arms were held out to me, and I threw myself into them with absolute abandon. She sought to soothe and comfort me, but the situation admitted of no consolation. Deeply and entirely as I loved the man who had written that letter, nothing in the world could tempt me to justify myself in his eyes. His implied estimate of my character was too low for me to stoop to correct it: I would have died rather than endeavor to extenuate my conduct.

That was a memorable night to me. I have been frequently accused of possessing no heart: up to that time the charge was false. Light, flippant, thoughtless, I had been, but still not heartless. I think the suffering caused me by that letter almost wrenched the organ of

feeling from my body and left me an automaton well-nigh bereft of capacity for emotion.

Lady Denbigh could not but show her surprise at my self-mastery the next morning. She made some slight reference to the previous night, but I sealed her lips with a light kiss.

"That letter was the closing chapter of an old volume," I said, significantly. "Dear Lady Denbigh, the story was not worth remembering: the plot was very poor and commonplace, and the style execrable. Let us toss the book away back upon that shelf in our memories where we place those uninteresting trifles we desire to forget: shall we?"

"Of course, if you so wish, my dear. But, Evelyn, I am an old woman and your friend; testimony from me should have some weight with a man. If I can be of service, my dear——"

I interrupted her a little harshly, as I drew myself proudly erect:

"By giving me a written character, do you mean?—as if I were a housemaid in search of a situation! Thanks, thanks, dear Lady Denbigh; but I will marry no man who needs testimonials as to my virtue."

And those were the last words I have ever uttered in regard to the subject. I finished out my visit at Denbigh Court, even prolonging it a few days beyond the first limit I had set, as I wished to be absolutely sure of myself before subjecting myself to mamma's all-searching eye. I felt that Paul Sturgis would not care to remain long in London after I should return there; and indeed one of the first bits of news that greeted my ears upon my home-coming was that he had left for Paris the previous day.

I found, awaiting me, a letter from Hope-Fearing. I had expected it, and was prepared for ardent protest, heart-broken entreaties, and well-deserved reproach. I was disappointed, however. The letter was a most manly and creditable performance, and the forbearance and leniency it manifested toward me awoke in me a deeper sense of self-disgust and a livelier recognition of the utter cold-bloodedness of my behavior toward him than any amount of recrimination would have effected. With scarcely a word of protest he accepted his dismissal, and acceded to my wishes.

"I knew it must come sooner or later," ran the conclusion; "and that it has come later than I expected, and has thus allowed me a longer period of grace than I could reasonably have hoped, I thank God. I have been a coward to permit my selfish love to compromise your good name; but, Evelyn, you will forgive me that? I leave England, tomorrow, for the Continent, and shall be absent for some time. God bless you! God bless you! Never reproach yourself for your goodness to me. My dear one, my love for you will do me no harm. We may meet, perhaps, never again, but always, and for ever and ever, in life and in death, I shall be

"Yours, and yours only,

"GORDON HOPE."

He left off in his signature the appendix of his wife's name, which he had assumed upon his marriage. I have never seen him since. He

generally manages to spend the season abroad, and when in England he is usually at Hensleigh Grange. I hear of him occasionally from Constance Dering, who, I fancy, gives him news of me from time to time.

Paul Sturgis did not return to England before going back to America, much to Élise's disgust. For some reason mamma did not seem to take his non-return to heart as much as Élise did. Indeed, I thought she appeared to be rather relieved, and I wondered whether he could have taken her to task a bit about me; for, knowing what a prime favorite he had ever been with her, I could not in any other way explain her not sharing in Élise's disappointment.

I tried to sound her regarding the matter, but, with her usual cleverness in evading any annoying topic, she adroitly turned the subject, so that, without positively forcing it, I could learn nothing from her. But from various indications I fancied that there was some cause, quite independent of me, that made Paul's absence more welcome to her than his presence would have been, and I was greatly puzzled as to what this cause could be.

I soon discovered, to my endless mortification, what it was. Mamma sometimes, in my absence, will make use of my desk, as her own is apt to become overloaded with bills, notes, cards, and the many *etceteras* appertaining to the correspondence of a woman of the world. This habit often causes me considerable annoyance, for mamma does not scruple to make free with my writing-materials, nor does she hesitate to cram my pigeon-holes with documentary matter which is of no value to me. It is generally my custom, upon my return, to effect a clearance of all her belongings and set my house again in order, making the waste-basket the recipient of the epistolary matter she confides to it.

A few days after I came back from Denbigh Court I was thus occupied, when I came across a letter in a handwriting I at once recognized as Paul's. Correspondence in our little family has always been in common, and we never hesitate among ourselves to read any letters addressed to each other that may fall in our way: therefore I immediately devoured this. It was dated from Sheraton Castle, the day previous to my meeting Paul, and these were the contents:

"DEAR MRS. HILLIARD,—

"You will doubtless be surprised to learn that I am in England. Indeed, I am almost surprised myself, for my decision to accompany Lord Derrington home was so sudden that I have scarcely yet got accustomed to the idea. The impulse was an unpremeditated one, born, I think, of a few very hot days, which made the prospect of a sea-voyage exceedingly difficult to resist. Lord Derrington's earnest solicitations did the rest.

"I shall probably run up to London to-morrow or the next day, and shall do myself the pleasure of calling upon you, when we can discuss more satisfactorily the subject of the loan. I trust that you will do me the kindness not to insist upon paying me the interest on it, as I assure you I have not the slightest need of the money and can readily understand that the expenses of a London society woman must

be very considerable. Do, dear Mrs. Hilliard, indulge, in this very trifling matter, one who is most happy in being allowed to sign himself

"Your old friend,

"PAUL STURGIS.

"P.S. I trust your daughters are well. Please give them my kind regards."

I sat for a few moments stupefied. What—what did this mean? Was it possible that my requirements had exceeded the limits of mamma's income, and that she had applied to Paul for a loan to cover the deficiency?—a loan to be used for the purposes of that career which he so condemned? I, a debtor, a financial debtor, to Paul Sturgis! for that was what it must amount to. Mamma was only the means of securing the loan, and I was the object who had benefited by it. It was I, I, who was the humiliated recipient of his benefactions! Oh, horrible thought!

And yet I could not understand it. Our expenses were not heavy. My wardrobe was the most severe drain upon our resources, and that was much less expensive than any one would have supposed, owing to Jacquet's moderate charges. We lived economically, entertained very little,—and that in the most modest fashion,—and mamma's income ought, it seemed to me, amply to cover our expenses. I quite failed to comprehend the matter.

Mamma was in her own chamber, and, still holding Paul's letter in my hand, I went thither.

"Mamma," I broke out, with no attempt at prelude, "I have just found this letter in my desk. What does it mean?"

She took the letter, and I saw the little crease, which is a sign of annoyance with her, settle between her brows.

"Dear! dear!" she said, impatiently. "How careless I am!" Then, as she observed how uncompromisingly stiff and unbending was my attitude, she went on: "I don't see why you children should think you are at liberty to read all my letters, Evelyn."

"Excuse me, mamma," I replied, as courteously as I could, for my blood was at fever heat with impatience to solve this affair, "but that is neither here nor there. I *have* read the letter, and I wish to know, with your permission, what the loan is to which it refers."

Mamma's smooth, fair skin grew quite pink. I saw she was deeply embarrassed, though she endeavored to appear nonchalant and at ease.

"The loan?" she repeated, raising her eyebrows as if the question had somewhat perplexed her. "The loan? oh, yes! the loan—oh!—Well, that's nothing, my dear, nothing at all,—a little matter between Paul and me; that's all."

"But that is not enough for me," I said, abruptly. "Mamma, I have always yielded to you in the past, and have never questioned anything you saw fit to do. Now, however, an occasion has arisen when you must recognize the fact that I am no longer a child to submit to dictation, but a woman, with a woman's right to require a reason—

able explanation of matters that concern her. This loan in some way concerns me, for I am convinced that Paul Sturgis has reference to me when he speaks of the expenses of a society woman. I have a right to know what part I have played in your extraction of a loan from that man, and you must tell me."

Mamma was so unaccustomed to self-assertion on my part that for a moment she looked positively aghast. Then, perceiving that I was in deadly earnest and had no intention of being put off with a subterfuge, she said, irritably,—

"Well, well, Evelyn, do sit down, then. How can I talk to you when you stand towering above me as if you were about to fall upon and slay me? Draw up that chair, child."

After many preliminaries and much branching off into side-issues, adorned with pathetic wails against Fortune, she permitted me to get to the bottom of the business, and I can assure you the revelation was anything but pleasant hearing to me.

It seems that mamma had fallen into the hands of some gentleman broker, or promoter, or whatever the proper term is for the middle-man in speculating enterprises, while I was absent paying my round of visits during the winter. She had met him at dinner somewhere, and he had painted in such vivid colors the increasing value and golden future of some mining stock in which he was interested that he had wrought mamma up into a state of wild enthusiasm over the subject. The man, perceiving her interest, asked permission to call upon her and bring with him a printed prospectus of the mine. This proposition she acceded to, and the result was that the half-yearly dividend which she had just received from America went into the hands of her new acquaintance instead of being applied, as usual, to the settlement of our outstanding accounts.

Whether mamma's investment queered the stock, or whether it had been only temporarily inflated, I do not know, but instead of continuing to rise, as her broker and friend had assured her it would do, it dropped, dropped, dropped, until mamma's every available penny was eaten up in margins. Creditors began to press her for the settlement of their accounts; but so much of her ready money had now become involved in her mining speculations that she could not bring herself to sell, at such loss, the stock that had cost so heavily.

The broker declared it was but a question of time for a rapid rise to take place, and that then she would be amply recompensed for her courage in holding out. Meanwhile, what should she do? The time had come for us to go over to Paris and consult Jacquet as to the coming season; but our last account with him remained still unpaid, and I will say one thing for mamma, she has a very tender conscience where bills are concerned. She could not make up her mind to giving Jacquet another large order, *in propria persona*, until she had liquidated the debt she already owed him. But one course remained open to her,—to apply to Paul.

"Evelyn," she said, eying me narrowly when she had reached this point, "I don't know whether such an idea ever occurred to you or not, but—Paul Sturgis is very much in love with you."

I gave an incredulous laugh and shrugged my shoulders.

"Oh, yes, he is—or was," she continued, positively. "I don't know but what he has recovered by this time: certainly his not returning to England to see you looks like it. But he was: he wrote me so."

"*W—hat?*" I ejaculated, half rising from my chair in amazed surprise.

She nodded complacently.

"Yes: didn't you suspect it? Well, I did, long ago, when he made such a fuss about your being at Mrs. Brander-Burton's bazaar. I felt at the time that it was nothing but pure jealousy that made him act so, and my suspicion was confirmed by a letter he wrote me after he returned to America. It was an apology for his conduct on that occasion, and a sort of tentative offer for you; that is, he did not exactly ask you in marriage, but made a declaration of his love as an excuse for his loss of self-control on that afternoon."

She paused, and I sat looking stupidly at her as if she were relating to me some curious, wild dream. Could it be true, this that she was telling me, this fabulous tale? She must have thought me scarcely interested in it, for I gave no sign of the conflict that was going on within me.

"What did you say to him in reply?" I asked, dully.

"Jested it off, of course," she said, lightly. "You don't suppose that I let him think, for an instant, that I would tolerate the idea of your sacrificing your career to a mere American lawyer, good fellow though he undoubtedly is? No, indeed! I wrote him that you had entered heart and soul into the life of a society woman, and that although I had not mentioned the matter of his declaration to you, yet I knew you sufficiently well to feel that by refraining from doing so I had simply spared him the pain of a refusal."

And it was she, my mother, who had done me this injury! Unwittingly, it is true; although it is doing her no injustice to say that she would have acted precisely the same even had she felt that I returned Paul's love. The divine passion plays little part in my mother's calculations.

I felt too dazed and broken to denounce her course of action. Then, too, I am always ashamed to give way to emotion before mamma; she cannot comprehend one's losing control of one's self; she considers a display of feeling a sign of physical indisposition, a premonitory symptom of indigestion or anæmia. Therefore I locked my hands tightly together and set my teeth, while she, observing nothing of what I was enduring, continued:

"Knowing how tenderly Paul felt toward you,"—I winced,—"I wrote him, when I became so embarrassed, that I needed five thousand dollars to tide us over the coming season; that your expenses were naturally large, and that if he could loan me the amount I should strain every nerve to retrench, in order to repay him by degrees; that I felt sure he would not have long to wait for his money, as, with the brilliant offers you were constantly receiving, I was certain that you must soon make a match that would enable you to reimburse him."

I could control myself no longer.

"Mamma!" I cried, springing to my feet and glaring down at her with hot, flashing eyes, "you did this? You implicated me in such a miserable piece of business as this?"

She looked up at me in vague alarm, as if marvelling what had taken possession of me.

"Why, Evelyn!" she said, in a surprised tone of remonstrance, "what is the matter? Your conduct is very singular—and very unbecoming, I must say. As though it is anything to borrow a thousand pounds! Why, I could repay it to-morrow, if it were absolutely necessary."

"Then do it! do it!" I cried, entreatingly, allowing her to fancy that my emotion had no deeper cause than the feeling that we were in debt. What use placing my heart on my sleeve for daws to peck at?

She flicked at a fly with her cambric handkerchief.

"Indeed, I shall do nothing of the sort," she said, indifferently. "There is no immediate hurry about it. Paul told me to take all the time I wanted. He has no need of the money, he says. Besides, I shall insist upon paying him a fair rate of interest."

"Then, if I cannot move you to repaying him at once, one thing I shall exact, and that is that before the sun sets to-night you write Paul Sturgis and clear me of all implication in this affair. Tell him that I have but just learned of it; tell him that I do not sanction it; tell him"—it was in a low, suffocating tone of mortally wounded pride that I muttered the concluding words—"that I would have died rather than ask him for a farthing." Then, raising my head, with a violent and successful effort at self-control, I looked squarely and commandingly into mamma's astonished and somewhat abashed eyes. "Promise me that you will do this at once, *to-day*," I said, firmly; "for if you do not, unpleasant as the task will be, I shall write him myself."

She gave a sort of terrified look at me,—I fancy she thought me a little mad,—but there was that in my expression that exacted compliance with my demand.

"Do you promise?" I asked.

"Why, yes, I suppose so," she replied, hesitatingly, "if you insist. But I must say, Evelyn, you are making a mountain out of a mole-hill."

"Perhaps I am," I assented. "But that is my own affair. Please be so good as to let me read the letter after you have written it. And, mamma,"—I was about to leave the room, and paused an instant on the threshold,—"*one other thing* I would suggest: that in the future, when a man desires to marry me, you will at least inform me of the fact before giving him a definite answer."

And then I closed the door behind me and went to my room. Not to throw myself upon the bed and bemoan my unhappy fate; not to indulge in the luxury of tears and bitter lamentations. Oh, no! Such relief is denied the victims of the modern Moloch, Society. It is required of us that, whether hearts are breaking or souls are suffering, we preen and plume ourselves for the sacrifice, decking our bodies with becoming raiment and our faces with merry smiles, that we may present a fair front to the world, while our inner beings are undergoing the rack and torture which the service of the god requires.

Therefore I summoned Julie and made an elaborate toilette, and, crushing down the last expiring protests of what was once a careless, not unkindly, girl's heart, sallied forth with unruffled composure and placid mien, to receive the admiration and homage which had become my necessary pabulum. And so, *vale*, Evelyn Hilliard, girl! and *salve*, Evelyn Hilliard, woman!

I have never seen Paul Sturgis since that day. I have never even heard of him, excepting in the most indirect way. I know him to be still unmarried, however.

Oh! it is so charming down here in this adorable Jersey! I feel almost like a girl again beneath the influence of these gentle, kindly people. I hate to sit up here and review a career that seems so foreign to their conceptions of what life is given us for. My own actions, as I rehearse them in this manuscript, bear such a loathsome, unlovely aspect, I cannot but feel how meretricious is the success I have attained. I realize, despite the pleasure I have derived from it, what a hollow sham the existence of a society woman is.

I cannot restrain my thoughts from wandering to Paul Sturgis, and the "might have been" of my life. It is strange how, ever since I came down here, my mind has been occupied with the image of that man. Strange, and not strange, for Élise's assertion that he is coming abroad again would naturally recall him to my memory. He will be in England, and I shall not see him! Well, I am glad of that; glad to be spared the ordeal, for, despite the fact that I have no heart left to be wounded or to suffer by means of him, yet it would be unpleasant at least to be subjected to intercourse with him.

I have done wisely to come down here and so avoid him. I feel a better and a happier woman with Mary Carteret. She reminds me much of Conny Dering, though less worldly and of course far less beautiful. But there is the same innate nobility and goodness in both women: they are of a higher type than one often comes in contact with. Well, to go back to my story.

The marriage of Robby Starkweather and Sibyl McCarthy was arranged for the first of August, and I assisted at the event as one of six bridesmaids. At the wedding breakfast a bit of news was announced which was a greater surprise to most of those who were present than to me,—though no one received it with more genuine delight than I. It was the engagement of Fifi with Lord Derrington; and I was amused to catch the prospective bridegroom's eyes fixed upon me with a deprecating expression as Lord Denbigh arose to propose the health of the newly-affianced pair.

I think I may consider myself the *deus ex machina* of that match, as I did my prettiest to urge Derrington into it, and I am happy to say it has turned out well. Fifi always adored him, and he was sufficiently fond of her to make her an excellent husband.

A little incident happened at Sir Robby's wedding which—

* * * * *

I have been for some time sitting staring at this manuscript and wondering if I am indeed the same woman who, miserable, heart-sick, and disappointed in all her hopes, with weary effort penned it all.

I have taken my hand-mirror and gazed into it at the radiant face of a perfectly happy girl, a face whose every line and curve has been softened and glorified by the magic touch of Love triumphant. I have been vain all my life, but now am I a very peacock of conceit, for—he has praised my beauty! He, Paul, my beloved, my dear one, my lover now and for evermore!

It was so wonderful that day!—*that day*? Why, it was but yesterday, and yet it seems such happy ages ago, when Mary Carteret came up and announced to me that a gentleman was below in the drawing-room to see me. And then, never suspecting the joy that awaited me, I went reluctantly down and opened the door. No one was there. I passed out through the open French window into the lovely garden, and found——!

No words passed between us at first. Paul's arms were held out to me, and I went home to them. With them about me, with his dear eyes gazing into mine, with his lips laid upon those I gladly yielded him, there was no need of words.

The happy tears are falling from my eyes and obscuring my writing. Then, too, what need of continuing this work! Love has cancelled my debt. But there is another I owe,—a debt of never-ending gratitude to dear Lady Denbigh, who, knowing how deeply Paul's thrust had struck home to my soul, wrote him such a letter in praise of my unworthy self and explanation of certain events which had been prejudicial to my fair fame in his unworldly eyes, that, with his great love prompting him to credit her estimate of me, he finally, after long battling, gave up the struggle, threw down his arms, and came hastening across the big pond to this lovely Paradise, which will forever be to us the Eden of our memories.

My career of Professional Beauty is ended; nor do I regret it. To become Paul's wife I gladly abdicate my former social sovereignty. Good-by, Evelyn Hilliard, poor, unsatisfied handmaid of Mammon! One who has aspired to greater glory than thine, and has attained it, salutes thee with commiserating pity!

THE END.

HOW I GAINED AN INCOME.

TO support and educate a family is not an easy task. So much every one will admit. Men, fully equipped for such an end, having had it held before them from early boyhood, find it difficult of accomplishment, and often, if complications of ill health or misfortune arise, impossible. Perhaps, therefore, a woman who has accomplished so much may have a claim, even if a very modest one, to success, and may the less hesitate to urge the claim if in doing so she is forced to admit failure in other respects. I will begin, therefore, by the confession that I certainly have not, so far, attained the goal of my early ambitions. I have no name well known in the world of letters, and am not in a position to boast of my literary attainment. I have simply succeeded in educating my children, thoroughly equipping them for an independence which was mine only after much suffering and effort, and in securing a comfortable income for myself and the prospect of an independent old age. Yet I venture to hope that possibly my experience may have a greater value for discouraged women than if it had lain among the laurels of literature.

My intention, when I entered the field as a bread-winner some ten years ago, was distinctly to be a literary light, possibly even a star of magnitude. Indeed, in the earlier days of returned manuscripts I considered journalism as entirely beneath my consideration, and when, through force of circumstances, I reluctantly entered upon the thorny path familiar to all writers for the press, I did so with the flattering belief that as an art critic I had little in common with journalists as such, and still less with reporters, whom I then held in light esteem.

Alas for my egotistical conceit! I soon had reason to learn that I was but a minnow in the ocean of journalism. A very short experience of the outskirts of the world of letters taught me two things very thoroughly,—one being that to gain any hearing at all it was necessary to possess more than mere ability; the other, that sympathy for me as a woman with three children to support might help me over the threshold, but certainly would not secure me an income.

But, after all, these are important lessons, and I may at least claim for myself that I learned them quickly, whereas in many cases they are either not learned at all or are acquired too late for the knowledge to be of practical advantage. Yet even after I had realized them as facts it took me several years to put them into practice: I might never have done so but for the plain speaking of a business friend. One day, in deep discouragement, I was bemoaning the difficulties I met with,—the unpleasantly frequent occurrence of rejected manuscripts, for example,—and mournfully declaring that, although I had put all my ambitions aside, and become not only a journalist and reporter but a perfect hack, doing all sorts of odds and ends of miserably worthless work, writing up openings, and scampering round New York and Brooklyn like an over-driven steed for a mere pittance, I could barely meet my

necessary expenses and could by no possibility give my children the advantages I desired. He fell upon me somewhat in this wise:

"I'm not surprised at it. I never expect to see you doing anything but struggling. There's no money in *your* line. But of course you look down upon us business people, who could buy up all the poor authors in New York City and not miss the money. I could soon show you how to make money. How do you suppose I make mine? But you would never do it, and would probably think it beneath you."

It had not, indeed, occurred to me to ask where my friend's wealth came from. I knew that his family lived comfortably and that he was considered a person of means, and my interest in the matter remained languid even after his explanation was made. It conveyed but little intelligence to my mind when he went on to state that he had been the advertising manager for a large firm, and added, with a certain complacent confidence, that much of its success was owing to his efforts.

Advertising, indeed, only suggested to me columns of enormous type, inartistic cuts, and general vulgarity. The mere thought of such a method of gaining an income was revolting to me, when at last it dimly dawned upon my mind that there might be something in such a plane of effort worthy of consideration. But sometimes changes in our destiny are brought about by very simple agencies; and I owe it entirely to that shot of my friend's, fired apparently into the air, that to-day I am in comfortable circumstances, possessed of more or less property, that my children are fully equipped for their own place in life (which is by no means a low one), and that old age, as it slowly advances, possesses no terrors for me,—if indeed I should at forty-eight, in these days of rejuvenescence, dare to consider myself even middle-aged. But hard work and much anxiety do not keep one youthful, and my contemporaries must forgive me if I confess that my main object now is to continue to prosper in my undertakings in such a way as to secure an independence to the end.

This record being in some sort a confession, I feel that it is incumbent upon my honesty to admit that more than mere pride was broken down before I seriously turned my attention to the field of money-getting suggested to me in which I have since succeeded. Grief entered my life, and ambition died before it,—personal ambition, I mean,—while the desire for my children's welfare remained as strong as ever. It no longer seemed a matter of any importance to win that name in the world of letters which had so long appealed to my love of fame. I turned from the grave of my son to the fortune of my daughters: money alone could secure for them the fuller, higher education with which I desired to equip them. The first step in its accumulation was taken when I ordered an unobtrusive little card to be printed for circulation among business houses, stating that, as an experienced writer, I was willing to prepare advertisements, letter-heads, and circulars.

This modest card I enclosed in personal letters, addressed to the heads of firms which I selected from the Business Directory. I can but smile as I recall the absolute ignorance which I displayed in the whole matter, and yet, possibly, it was the unconventional method of my address which won me a hearing. Be that as it may, the very first batch of such

letters sent through the mail brought me two replies requesting me to call. One was from a large clothing-house, the other from a manufacturer of wall-paper. Perhaps I never in my life received a more complete set-back than when, in each case, after being introduced into the sanctum of the head of the firm, I was asked what I had to propose as advantageous for their line of business. I, in my utter ignorance and incapacity, had expected all proposals to come from them; and there I sat dumfounded, face to face with my own empty-headedness. However, my woman's wit came to my aid. I said, "I must first know the nature of the business before I can offer suggestions." I can laugh now as I recall how often this lucky hit saved me from appearing the fool I really felt; for it always enabled me to add that, as much of what I heard was new to me, I should like to consider it, and call again when I should have a proposal to make. Some of my proposals must have been amusing. What consultations I had with my business acquaintances after such interviews! What absurd suggestions I often made, and how difficult I should have found it to carry many of them out had they been accepted, my readers may imagine. But, although I made endless mistakes and met many serious rebuffs, I soon realized the truth of my friend's assertion that money could be made in the business world. Whereas every editor of whom I had any experience had been personally sympathetic and yet sorry to see me and glad to get rid of me, every business man I have ever approached has looked upon me as a possibly profitable vehicle, has never dreamed of offering me sympathy, but has been able and willing to pay liberally for any work I undertook and thoroughly accomplished.

At that time trade journals were not as common as they have since become, and one of my earliest successes in the advertising world was the publication of a small magazine for a firm of very good standing, "rushing in," like the proverbial fool, where, in the acquired wisdom of experience, I should now hesitate to enter. I undertook the whole business,—editing, illustrating (looking up artists for this purpose), printing, publishing, and circulating. To be candid, I had not the smallest idea of the responsibility I had undertaken. No book of value ever launched upon the ocean of literature has been born with greater pangs than this twopenny-halfpenny little advertising magazine. What pride I had in it! What immense trouble I took! What agonies I endured when printers and artists conspired, as it appeared to me, to thwart my intentions! It was my first effort in the field of pure money-making *versus* fame-seeking. Well, it was, in its small way, a success. The first issue was followed by many succeeding numbers, and, although it came out only quarterly, it served a most useful purpose in my new scheme of life. I carried a copy of it everywhere, and it answered as a passport more thoroughly than any mere introduction could have done. Could I not proudly assert that I had written every article in it myself, printed and published it, without any trouble to the merchant? It led to many more such orders, and ultimately to regular salaried engagements.

How funny my work was sometimes! I remember, early in this experience, undertaking to write a pamphlet upon the effect of elec-

tricity upon the circulation of the blood, for which I was to be paid only if, upon its being read to a committee, it proved perfectly satisfactory. The ordeal of reading before the committee, which consisted of six organizers of a company, was severe; but I had asked a good price for it, and came out triumphant. I don't think there was much accuracy of knowledge among the judges of my performance. Nor shall I ever forget the first terrible efforts in my new field of work when they took the form of canvassing from store to store to obtain orders for pamphlets or descriptive articles. Well indeed do I remember starting out each bright morning, determined to call upon at least thirty stores and interview as many of the managers as I could induce to see me. Ah, well, the rebuffs I gained were hard to bear; many a day I returned in tears: and yet they were few in comparison to the rejected manuscripts of the past. In a shorter time than seems credible, within one year from the start, I was being offered salaries of forty and fifty dollars a week to attend to the advertising details of good firms.

What an education it has been! One such position I occupied, and from the experience gained there was able, upon leaving it, to double and treble the good salary I received. If fame remained as far off as ever, there was abundant compensation in a full purse, in a home slowly growing up, in children's lives made happy and their future assured. Soon there was money to invest, and enough insight had been gained in the business world to make such investments profitable. In time managing other people's businesses developed into carrying one on independently, and experience still confirms the wisdom of my friend's advice.

When, in these later years, scarcely a day passes over my head without an appeal from some struggling woman for help or advice, it has seemed to me that a frank record of my own experience as a bread-winner would be helpful to them; they may more readily forgive my constant assertion that ignorance and incompetency are the true lions in the road to success when I own how incompetent I have been myself. A valued friend of mine, a lady doctor widely known throughout New England, gave me one of the most valuable lessons of my life by calmly remarking, after I had been deploring one of my many failures, "Well, my dear, you overrated yourself, you see." That is just it. We are all so apt to overrate ourselves, and there is nothing like a business experience for knocking the conceit out of one. Women more particularly, who, being refined and fairly well educated, are thrown upon their own resources, and who in their own circles have been accustomed to a sort of success, who can write bright letters, or do a little painting or decorative needlework, enter the bread-winner's field imagining that they must succeed because their friends consider them exceptionally clever. There never was a greater mistake. The business world pays only for what it wants, and if women—and men too, for that matter—would take this truth home to them and ponder upon it, much heart-breaking disappointment would be spared them and their friends. For this is what the market value of a thing really means: it will fetch only what it is worth.

I recall with shame how earnestly and how vainly a well-wisher of mine, an eminent publisher, tried many years ago to impress this fact upon my mind. "You will succeed," he used to say, "as soon as you produce what somebody wants, but not so long as your merit is only that of a woman who is struggling." In common with a great many other women not brought up to work, I had a vague sort of idea that my misfortunes were a passport and would gain me an income. Let me assure every woman similarly placed that they never will. Sympathy is readily awakened, but it is in the nature of things short-lived. Respect for effort earnest and continued is a much better ally. In an experience ranging over many years, I must honestly say that every time I have failed it has been through my own ignorance and incompetency, and that my success has been built up upon failures many and severe. The best equipment that either men or women could have is definite knowledge, if it be only of one thing. The first question I ask those who come to me for advice is, "What can you do?" If the answer is,—as it almost invariably proves to be,—"Anything," my heart fills with despair for the applicant. In the money-making world, "anything" means "nothing;" it is overrun with a vast army of incapables ready to rush in and undertake "anything." What is needed is some one who can do something, as opposed to any one who can do anything. Competency is the only equipment that is worth anything nowadays.

In the world of letters a fleeting success may be gained by a brilliant writer, but not a tangible, money-making success unless there is some knowledge behind the brilliancy. In the world of business, incomes are results, not of brilliant incompetency, but of accuracy, method, devotion, steady application, often of attention to things of so little apparent value that the educated but inexperienced woman entering the world of work considers them as of little importance, while upon them may hinge the success of a large business. It is a trite thing to speak of "character" as an important factor in success, but it is pre-eminently so in the business world; and many a woman has failed simply because she has not learned the value of punctuality or looked upon it in the light of "character." Yet honor in the business world is built up upon it. The punctual discharge of obligations is the key-note of business reputation: to be "as good as one's word" is equivalent to capital.

How trivial such statements seem! But life is made up of little things, and I have seen many brilliant careers cut short by neglect of them, as I have also watched, in the passing years, the gradual acquirement of property by women who had nothing to commend them to their employers but steadiness and punctuality. Women to-day should reflect that they can enter any field of work they choose. No one forbids them: all they have to do is to prove their competency when they *have* entered it, and the reward will be theirs. It sounds unsentimental, but it expresses a very sincere conviction when I add that I do not believe that any thoroughly competent person need long seek work in vain in New York City, and this not in any special direction, but in all. There is always room at the top, and indeed

plenty to spare a long way before the top is reached. While it is true that mechanical inventions tend more and more to the demand for specialized knowledge of certain branches of manufacture and trade, and thus sometimes compel a corresponding degree of ignorance of other branches, it is not less true that the qualities which command actual success are the same always and everywhere: they are punctuality, earnestness, devotion to detail. Such qualities cover a multitude of the shortcomings of ignorance; and, whatever may be true of the wonderful "coming age," in the present conditions of the business world no one need starve who possesses them and is imbued at the same time with a willingness to learn.

In my later experience as an employer of labor, these home truths are daily impressed upon my mind. How difficult it is to secure good and faithful service, how rare to find intelligence wedded to punctuality and regard for trifles! I am sure I only echo the thoughts of hundreds of employers when I ask, "Where, in the vast army of the unemployed, of which we hear so much, is the man or woman who will fill the positions I have to offer?" Echo answers, and always will answer, "Where?" until more persons learn to lay aside vague yearnings for imaginary honors and accept faithfully the limitations and responsibilities of every-day business life. Its rewards may not be so tempting as the glittering bubble of fame, but they are a good deal more substantial, and, what is more to the point, more likely to be reached.

A Bread-Winner.

SPRING SHOWERS.

A GEISHA SONG.

(From the Japanese.)

WHEN warm south winds evoke the vernal showers,
 To budding plum-trees feathered songsters fly,
 And revel in the fragrance of the flowers,
 And carol forth their gladness to the sky.
 Now that no more are felt keen winter's harms,
 Each longs most ardently for peace and rest;
 Within the lovely plum-trees' sheltering arms
 Each yearns to build and hover round his nest.

I am the little songster on the bough
 (Ah, prithee listen to my humble lay),
 And the sweet plum-tree's blossom, dear, art thou,
 Who cheerest all with joy the livelong day.
 So thus when all the storms of life are past,
 And I, perchance, have made my humble store,
 Then, then, my love, all care aside we'll cast
 And live in peace and love for evermore.

Walter Rogers Furness.

"THE YOUNG RAVENS THAT CALL UPON HIM."

IT was just before dawn, and a grayness was beginning to trouble the dark about the top of the mountain.

Even at that cold height there was no wind. The veil of cloud that hid the stars hung but a hand-breadth above the naked summit. To eastward the peak broke away sheer, beetling in a perpetual menace to the valleys and the lower hills. Just under the brow, on a splintered and creviced ledge, was the nest of the eagles.

As the thick dark shrank down the steep like a receding tide, and the grayness reached the ragged heap of branches forming the nest, the young eagles stirred uneasily under the loose droop of the mother's wings. She raised her head and peered about her, slightly lifting her wings as she did so; and the nestlings, complaining at the chill air that came in upon their unfledged bodies, thrust themselves up amid the warm feathers of her thighs. The male bird, perched on a jutting fragment beside the nest, did not move. But he was awake. His white, narrow, flat-crowned head was turned to one side, and his yellow eye, under its straight, fierce lid, watched the pale streak that was growing along the distant eastern sea-line.

The great birds were racked with hunger. Even the nestlings, to meet the petitions of whose gaping beaks they stinted themselves without mercy, felt meagre and uncomfortable. Day after day the parent birds had fished almost in vain; day after day their wide and tireless hunting had brought them scant reward. The schools of alewives, mackerel, and herring seemed to shun their shores that spring. The rabbits seemed to have fled from all the coverts about their mountain.

The mother eagle, larger and of mightier wing than her mate, looked as if she had met with misadventure. Her plumage was disordered. Her eyes, fiercely and restlessly anxious, at moments grew dull as if with exhaustion. On the day before, while circling at her viewless height above a lake far inland, she had marked a huge lake-trout basking near the surface of the water. Dropping upon it with half-closed, hissing wings, she had fixed her talons in its back. But the fish had proved too heavy for her. Again and again it had dragged her under water, and she had been almost drowned before she could unloose the terrible grip of her claws. Hardly, and late, had she beaten her way back to the mountain-top.

And now the pale streak in the east grew ruddy. Rust-red stains and purple, crawling fissures began to show on the rocky face of the peak. A piece of scarlet cloth, woven among the fagots of the nest, glowed like new blood in the increasing light. And presently a wave of rose appeared to break and wash down over the summit, as the rim of the sun came above the horizon.

The male eagle stretched his head far out over the depth, lifted his wings, and screamed harshly as if in greeting of the day. He paused a moment in that position, rolling his eye upon the nest. Then his

head went lower, his wings spread wider, and he launched himself smoothly and swiftly into the abyss of air as a swimmer glides into the sea. The female watched him, a faint wraith of a bird darting through the gloom, till presently, completing his mighty arc, he rose again into the full light of the morning. Then on level, all but moveless wing, he sailed away toward the horizon.

As the sun rose higher and higher, the darkness began to melt on the tops of the lower hills and to diminish on the slopes of the upland pastures, lingering in the valleys as the snow delays there in spring. As point by point the landscape uncovered itself to his view, the eagle shaped his flight into a vast circle, or rather into a series of stupendous loops. His neck was stretched toward the earth, in the intensity of his search for something to ease the bitter hunger of his nestlings and his mate.

Not far from the sea, and still in darkness, stood a low round hill, or swelling upland. Bleak and shelterless, whipped by every wind that the heavens could let loose, it bore no bush but an occasional juniper scrub. It was covered with mossy hillocks, and with a short grass, meagre but sweet. There in the chilly gloom, straining her ears to catch the lightest footfall of approaching peril, but hearing only the hushed thunder of the surf, stood a lonely ewe over the lamb to which she had given birth in the night.

Having lost the flock when the pangs of travail came upon her, the unwonted solitude filled her with apprehension. But as soon as the first feeble bleating of the lamb fell upon her ear, everything was changed. Her terrors all at once increased tenfold,—but they were for her young, not for herself; and with them came a strange boldness such as her heart had never known before. As the little weakling shivered against her side, she uttered low, short bleats and murmurs of tenderness. When an owl hooted in the woods across the valley, she raised her head angrily and faced the sound, suspecting a menace to her young. When a mouse scurried past her, with a small, rustling noise amid the withered mosses of the hillock, she stamped fiercely, and would have charged had the intruder been a lion.

When the first gray of dawn descended over the pasture, the ewe feasted her eyes with the sight of the trembling little creature as it lay on the wet grass. With gentle nose she coaxed it and caressed it, till presently it struggled to its feet, and, with its pathetically awkward legs spread wide apart to preserve its balance, it began to nurse. Turning her head as far around as she could, the ewe watched its every motion with soft murmurings of delight.

And now that wave of rose, which had long ago washed the mountain and waked the eagles, spread tenderly across the open pasture. The lamb stopped nursing; and the ewe, moving forward two or three steps, tried to persuade it to follow her. She was anxious that it should as soon as possible learn to walk freely, so they might together rejoin the flock. She felt that the open pasture was full of dangers.

The lamb seemed afraid to take so many steps. It shook its ears and bleated piteously. The mother returned to its side, caressed it anew, pushed it with her nose, and again moved away a few feet, urging

it to go with her. Again the feeble little creature refused, bleating loudly. At this moment there came a terrible hissing rush out of the sky, and a great form fell upon the lamb. The ewe wheeled and charged madly; but at the same instant the eagle, with two mighty buffetings of his wings, rose beyond her reach and soared away toward the mountain. The lamb hung limp from his talons; and with piteous cries the ewe ran beneath, gazing upward, and stumbling over the hillocks and juniper bushes.

In the nest of the eagles there was content. The pain of their hunger appeased, the nestlings lay dozing in the sun, the neck of one resting across the back of the other. The triumphant male sat erect upon his perch, staring out over the splendid world that displayed itself beneath him. Now and again he half lifted his wings and screamed joyously at the sun. The mother bird, perched upon a limb on the edge of the nest, busily rearranged her plumage. At times she stooped her head into the nest to utter over her sleeping eaglets a soft chuckling noise, which seemed to come from the very bottom of her throat.

But hither and thither over the round bleak hill wandered the ewe, calling for her lamb, unmindful of the flock, which had been moved to other pastures.

Charles G. D. Roberts.

THE NEW DAWN.

A N hour ago we said good-by,
 My dream and I:
 The golden voice that promised me
 Love, light, fruition, ecstasy,
 Is silenced quite,
 And it is night.

Night, while the rent clouds fret the moon,
 And waters croon
 Beneath the fateful, running breeze
 That wakes a message in the trees:
 "Patience—and pray—
 Till comes the day."

The day is here, the azure day,
 A day in May!
 How can I grieve while Nature sings?
 The robins' call prophetic rings
 The one refrain,
 "You'll dream again!"

Kate Jordan.

AMERICANS ABROAD.

THERE is one current topic in which interest never flags, one subject which has the charm of perennial freshness ; and that is contained in the double question, How many Americans come to Europe, and what do they spend ? I have been asked for information on these points so often by American business men who wish to expand their foreign trade, and have been questioned so frequently about the cost of living abroad, that I have been compelled to gather some pertinent data, a portion of which will be condensed into this article. European, English, and American bankers doing international business, steamship companies, tourists' agencies, acquaintances residing and keeping their own establishments in various parts of Europe, the prefects of police, and many colleagues in the consular service, have been sources of suggestion and useful information. After all, though the results obtained are only approximate, still they seem sufficiently accurate to be in a measure satisfactory.

The number of Americans landed at the ports of Great Britain and the Continent during the year 1892 was, in round numbers, 95,000. This estimate includes first- and second-class passengers, but not those who came in the third cabin or the steerage. The whole number of persons carried by the various steamship companies from the United States to Europe in that year was 134,000.

In 1892 the number of first- and second-class cabin passengers carried to the United States from European and British ports was 120,991, the number of steerage passengers 388,486. There was a slight decrease in cabin passenger traffic, and a larger one in steerage business, on account of the rigid quarantine regulations imposed by the United States government to prevent the importation of cholera.

Of the 134,000 persons who sailed in 1892 from ports in the United States to Europe, 103,000 landed in Great Britain, and the remainder at Continental ports, Genoa receiving 2756 first- and second-class cabin passengers, and Havre 8087.

Taking the estimates of various banking houses, based upon their letters of credit, the annual expenditure of Americans in Europe amounts, in round numbers, to \$104,000,000, or about eleven hundred dollars for each person. This will be conceded to be a sufficiently low average. A journey of one hundred days' duration seldom costs less than a thousand dollars for ordinary living and travelling expenses. There are a great many people who spend less on a trip to Europe, but, on the other hand, there are quite as many who, in addition to the necessary expenditure, make large purchases of clothing, jewelry, pictures, objects of art, furniture, and curios, and there are several thousands who leave considerable sums of money on the gaming-tables at Monte Carlo. In the month of February, 1893, there were 80,558 visitors at Monte Carlo, and the prefect of police thinks that about 16,000 of them, or twenty per cent., were Americans.

WHERE AMERICANS GO.

All the Americans who come abroad do not go to Paris, or, if they do, their presence is not recorded at the police offices. The prefect of police had the names of twenty-eight thousand Americans returned to him by Parisian hotel-keepers in 1892, and he thinks nearly as many more were lodged in private houses, *appartements*, or *pensions*, making a total of fifty-four thousand, which corresponds with the estimate obtained from other sources.

The permanent American colony resident in Paris numbers at this time about twenty-five hundred. Formerly it was larger, but since the Paris Exposition of 1889, when prices of living were considerably advanced, never to be restored to their former level, it has been decreasing. After Paris, Berlin has perhaps the largest American colony in Europe, though its number of transient visitors is not more than half as large. Then comes Dresden, with a colony numbering one thousand. The number of American visitors who go annually to Dresden is between twenty and twenty-four thousand. Geneva has an American colony of two hundred and fifty, and is visited yearly by upwards of twenty thousand Americans, who, it is estimated, spend one and a half million dollars there. The hotels in Lucerne, from May 1 to October 1, 1892, sheltered nine thousand six hundred and forty-one guests, and two thousand more found accommodation in private lodgings and *pensions*. There is no permanent colony at Lucerne.

Carlsbad, which is so much visited by Americans, had in 1892 two thousand two hundred and twenty-four of them who paid the *curé* tax. Vichy, Aix-les-Bains, and Wiesbaden had each about half that number. Nice has had each season for the last six years from eighteen to twenty thousand American visitors. Rome, which has a permanent colony of two hundred, is much visited: the number of Americans there last year was estimated at thirty thousand. Florence had nearly the same number, and the amount of money spent by Americans in Italy each year is estimated at \$20,000,000.

COST OF LIVING.

The belief, so widely disseminated in the United States, that the cost of living is much cheaper in Europe, is no longer warranted by facts nor borne out by experience. I am speaking of the cost of food, rent, clothing, amusements, for people who have small fixed incomes; and I take for a basis a family of four with an income of five thousand dollars.

To a trained observer of great intelligence, who has resided with his family in Europe for a period of twelve years, I put the question, Do you find the cost of living well cheaper in Europe than in America? "I have lived," said he, "in five European countries, and may say in the first place that, as a rule, the days of cheap living, except in remote localities far from the lines of travel, are long since past. The cost of living, I find, varies very much in different European countries, and among different cities in the same country. Marseilles is more expensive than Paris, Frankfort-on-the-Main is more expensive than Munich

or Leipsic, Amsterdam is more costly than Brussels, while Aix-la-Chapelle is dearer than either Paris or Berlin.

"There are small, dull, and unattractive places in France, Germany, and Italy where one may live cheaply if one be content to live, like the natives, in bare, ill-furnished rooms, eat black bread, and have meat on the table but once a day. Few persons would care to live thus, however.

"Respectable living for a family, as Americans understand that term, is a little more expensive in Europe than in America. In other words, if you want to live quite as well abroad as you do at home, it will cost you more. Service, cabs, and some articles of clothing are cheaper. Rents are about the same in corresponding localities, but abroad the houses are less convenient. Cotton goods are cheaper in America than abroad, shoes and clothing are cheaper in Europe, but, as a rule, the shoes are much inferior in quality. A family living on five thousand dollars a year can have a better return for its money in Paris than in any other large city of Europe, provided always that some of its members speak the language well and can make bargains and practise economy like French people of the middle class. If one wishes to live in a fashionable quarter in Paris, life will be found thirty-three and a half per cent. dearer than in any American city except New York."

Railway fares, unless one travels in slow trains and miserably in third-class cars, are more expensive in Europe than in the United States, and the accommodation is inferior. For a sleeping-car berth from Paris to Nice one pays eighteen dollars; in America one may travel from New York to Chicago, a greater distance, in a sleeping-car for five dollars.

Life in good European hotels costs as much as it does in good hotels in America; but travellers may be independent and get cheap accommodation in third-class hotels, if they like: they will be badly lodged and fed. Open-air music, beer, wines, and common cigars cost less in Europe than in America, but good theatres, a first-class opera, and excellent cigars are quite as expensive abroad as at home.

Servants' wages are lower here, but experience proves that one good American servant does the work of two Europeans, and does it more simply and neatly.

Street-car fares are about the same in Europe as in America. Many medicines, such as quinine, for instance, are very much dearer.

The real difference in favor of Europe is that one may, if one chooses, adjust the standard of living to one's income. Economy is respected in Europe and is considered respectable, whereas in America this is not always the case. In Europe, even people of considerable means may live simply and economize in a way that at home would excite unpleasant comment. Here it is accepted as a matter of course. In the great and rich city of Lyons, with nearly half a million of inhabitants, I am told that there are not a hundred families who keep two carriage-horses.

Instruction in languages, music, art, and tuition at schools is quite as expensive everywhere in Europe as in the United States, except

perhaps in two or three of the larger cities. The days of cheap and good instruction are past in Europe.

Prices are finding a level throughout the civilized world, and this equalizing process will continue as long as the ways of communication are so easy and inexpensive.

In Dresden, the cost of living for American families is about the same as it is in the United States. Some luxuries are cheaper, but the necessities of life average about the same in cost. Rents are about the same as in cities of corresponding size in America; meat, tea, and coffee are considerably dearer in Dresden, says my informant, who has kept house there for several years; poultry and bread cost about the same, while clothing is about twenty-five per cent. cheaper.

Many Americans who come to Dresden are content to live in a much more simple and economical way than they do at home. A student who does not waste money can live comfortably on five hundred dollars a year. It is estimated that \$3,000,000 is spent yearly in Dresden by Americans.

In Munich the cost of living is somewhat less than in Dresden. A good apartment can be had for twenty-two hundred marks a year, and an income of five thousand dollars has more purchasing power than in America.

From experienced and reliable sources I learn that the cost of living in Geneva is, on the whole, less than in any of the large cities of America, if one lives as the Swiss do and practises the same little economies. "I am sure," said my informant, "that it is an excellent thing for Americans to keep house here for a time, in order to learn these sensible household economies, which are very numerous here, particularly in regard to the treatment of servants." Rents are about the same in Geneva as they are in cities of one or two hundred thousand inhabitants in America. A good apartment can be had for thirteen hundred or fifteen hundred francs; food costs about the same in Geneva as in the United States, with the exception of meat, which is much dearer, and inferior in quality. Education is a little cheaper here than at home, and a student who is economical can live comfortably on five hundred dollars a year.

In Rome the necessities of life are much dearer than in America, while the luxuries are less expensive. This makes it a desirable residence for those who say, "Give us the luxuries of life, and we will dispense with the necessities."

Rents in Rome are about the same as in cities of two hundred thousand inhabitants in America. A good apartment of eight rooms costs from fifty dollars to eighty dollars a month, according to the elegance of the house. Food and fuel cost, I am informed, thirty per cent. more than in the United States. A student cannot live as well on five hundred dollars a year in Rome as he could in America.

From Hanover, where, as many Americans think, the only pure German is spoken, I learn that life is, on the whole, about as dear there as it is in the United States. An income of five thousand dollars will not produce any more comfort than it will in a city of corresponding size in America. A well-informed man who keeps house there says he

finds, on the whole, that it costs him more to live in Hanover than it did in the United States.

Perhaps the cheapest capital of Europe to live in is Athens. It is a city of one hundred and twenty-five thousand inhabitants, and the temptations to extravagance are not great. Rents are lower than in most American cities of the same size, and so are food, clothing, and local transportation. Fuel, owing to the absence of coal in Greece and the paucity of wood, is dearer. A friend of mine rented in 1892 a handsomely furnished house, a minute's walk from the palace, and in the same block with the French and Russian legations, for six hundred dollars. The house contained ten rooms above the basement. But bargains of this sort cannot be had every day. Hotel life in Athens is reasonable as to price, and the accommodation is excellent. The hotels of Athens are the best in the East. "I can live as well for three dollars a day in one of the first-class hotels here," says Professor Mannatt, the consul at Athens, "as I can in London or New York for five dollars a day;" but he adds, "you can also pay any price which the manager, on looking you over, thinks you can bear." People are sometimes taken at these first-class hotels for as little as ten francs a day, fire, service, and meals included. The smaller hotels frequented by the Greeks are very inexpensive. An American and his wife live in great comfort at one of these hotels at fifty dollars a month for the two.

Pension, or board in families, costs at Athens twenty dollars a month and upwards, but the accommodation of this sort is limited.

Athens has a small permanent colony, and is visited by about fifteen hundred Americans each year, but the number is increasing. It is a very attractive place of residence, and the climate has much to recommend it to people who wish to avoid a harsh and humid atmosphere.

The sum of this inquiry is that for persons with a turn for economy life may be found less expensive in Europe than in America, but for those who wish to enjoy "all the comforts of home" it will generally be found somewhat dearer.

Francis B. Loomis.

CONSCIENCE.

THE friend I loved betrayed my trust
And bowed my spirit to the dust.
I keep the hurt he gave, yet know
He was forgiven long ago.

From him I did not merit ill,
But I would bear injustice still,
Content, could years of guiltless woe
Undo the wrong I did my foe.

Florence Earle Coates.

THE TRESPASSER.*

A NOVEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TRANSLATION OF A SAVAGE," "PIERRE AND HIS PEOPLE," "MRS. FALCHION," "THE CHIEF FACTOR," ETC.

(Continued from page 548.)

CHAPTER XIII.

HE JOURNEYS AFAR.

THE newspapers gossiped. Where was the new member? His friends could not tell, further than that he had gone abroad. Lord Faramond did not know, but fetched out his lower lip knowingly.

"The fellow has instinct for the game," he said.

Sketches, portraits, were in the daily and weekly journals, and one hardy journalist even gave an interview—which had never occurred. But Gaston remained a picturesque nine days' figure, and then Parliament rose for the year.

Meanwhile he was in Paris, and every morning early he could be seen with Jacques riding up the Champs-Élysées and out to the Bois de Boulogne. Every afternoon at three he sat for "Monmouth" or the "King of Ys" with his horse in his uncle's garden.

Ian Belward might have lived in a fashionable part: he preferred the Latin Quarter, with incursions into the other at fancy. Gaston lived for three days in the Boulevard Haussmann, and then took apartments, neither expensive nor fashionable, in a quiet street. He was surrounded by students and artists, a few great men and a host of small men; Collarossi's school here and Delacluse's there; models flitting in and out of the studios in his court-yard, who stared at him as he rode, and sought to gossip with Jacques—accomplished without great difficulty.

Jacques was transformed. A cheerful hue grew on his face. He had been an exile, he was now at home. His French tongue ran, now with words in the *patois* of Normandy, now of Brittany, and all with the accent of French Canada, an accent undisturbed by the changes and growths of France. He gossiped, but no word escaped him which threw any light on his master's history.

Soon, in the Latin Quarter, they were as notable as they had been at Ridley Court or in London. On the Champs-Élysées side people stared at the two,—chiefly because of Gaston's splendid mount and

Jacques's strange broncho. But they felt that they were at home. Gaston's French was not perfect, but it was enough for his needs. He got a taste of that freedom which he had handed over to the dungeons of convention two years before. He breathed. Everything interested him so much that the life he had led in England seemed very distant.

He wrote to Delia, of course. His letters were brief, most interesting, not tenderly intimate, and not daily. From the first they puzzled her a little, and continued to do so; but because her mother said, "What an impossible man!" she said, "Perfectly possible! Of course he is not like other men: he is a genius."

And the days went on.

Gaston little loved the purlieus of the Place de l'Opéra. One evening at a club in the Boulevard Malesherbes bored him. It was merely Anglo-American enjoyment dashed with French drama. The Bois was more to his taste, for he could stretch his horse's legs; but every day he could be found before some simple café in Montparnasse, sipping vermouth, and watching the gay, light life about him. He sat up with delight to see an artist and his "madame" returning from a journey in the country, seated upon sheaves of corn, quite unregarded by the world, doing as they listed with unabashed simplicity. He dined often at the little Hôtel St.-Malo near the Gare Montparnasse, where the excellent Pelletier played the host, father, critic, patron, comrade, —often benefactor,—to his *bons enfants*. He drank *vin ordinaire*, smoked Caporal cigarettes, made friends, and was in all as a savage—or a much-travelled English gentleman.

His uncle Ian had introduced him here as at other places of the kind, and, whatever his ulterior object was, had an artist's pleasure at seeing a layman enjoy the doings of Paris art life. Ian himself lived more luxuriously. In an avenue not far from the Luxembourg he had a small hôtel with a fine old-fashioned garden behind it, and here distinguished artists, musicians, actors, and actresses came at times.

The evening of Gaston's arrival he took him to a café and dined him, and afterwards to the Bullier,—there, merely that he might see; but this place had nothing more than a passing interest for him. His mind had the poetry of a free, simple—even wild—life, but he had no instinct for vice in the name of amusement. But the later hours spent in the garden under the stars, the cheerful hum of the boulevards coming to them distantly, stung his veins like good wine. They sat and talked, with no word of England in it at all, Jacques near, listening.

Ian Belward was at his best: genial, entertaining, with the art of the man of no principles, no convictions, and a keen sense of life's sublime incongruities. Even Jacques, whose sense of humor had grown by long association with Gaston, enjoyed the piquant conversation. The next evening the same. About ten o'clock a few men dropped in: a sculptor, artists, and Meyerbeer, an American newspaper correspondent—who, however, was not known as such to Gaston.

This evening Ian determined to make Gaston talk. To deepen a man's love for a thing, get him to talk of it to the eager listener: he passes from the narrator to the advocate unconsciously. Gaston was not to talk of England, but of the North, of Canada, Mexico, the Lotos

Isles. He did so picturesquely, yet simply too, in imperfect but sufficient French. But as he told of one striking incident in the Rockies he heard Jacques utter a quick expression of dissent. He smiled. He had made some mistake in detail. Now, Jacques had been in his young days in Quebec the village story-teller,—one who, by inheritance or competency, becomes semi-officially a *raconteur* for the parish, filling in winter evenings, nourishing summer afternoons, with tales weird, child-like, daring.

Now Gaston turned and said to Jacques,—

“Well, Brillon, I’ve forgotten, as you see: tell them how it was.”

Two hours later, when Jacques retired on some errand, amid ripe applause, Ian said,—

“You’ve got an artist there, Cadet: that description of the fight with the loup-garou was as good as a thing from Victor Hugo. Hugo must have heard just such yarns, and spun them on the pattern. Upon my soul, it’s excellent stuff. You’ve lived, you two.”

Another night Ian Belward gave a dinner, at which were present an actress, a singer of some repute, the American journalist, and others. Something that was said sent Gaston’s mind to the House of Commons. Presently he saw himself in a ridiculous picture: a buffalo dragging the Treasury Bench about the Chamber; as one conjures things in an absurd dream. He laughed outright, at a moment when Mademoiselle Cérise was telling of a remarkable effect she produced one night in “Fédora,” unpremeditated, inspired; and Mademoiselle Cérise, with smiling lips and eyes like daggers, called him a bear. This brought him to himself, and he swam with the enjoyment. He did enjoy it, but not as his uncle wished and hoped. Gaston did not respond eagerly to the charms of Mademoiselle Cérise and Madame Juliette.

Was Delia, then, so strong in the barbarian’s mind? He could not think so; but Gaston had not shown yet, either for model, for daughter of joy, or for the mesdemoiselles of the stage, any disposition to an amour or a *mésalliance*: either would be interesting and sufficient. Models went in and out of Ian’s studio and the studios of others, and Gaston chatted with them at times; and once he felt the bare arm and breast of a girl as she sat for a nymph, and said in an interested way that her flesh was as firm and fine as a Tongan’s. He even disputed with his uncle on the tints of her skin on seeing him paint it in, showing a fine eye for color. But there was nothing more; he was impressed, observant, interested,—that was all. His uncle began to wonder if the Englishman was, after all, deeper in the grain than the savage. He contented himself with the belief that the most vigorous natures are the most difficult to rouse. Mademoiselle Cérise sang, with *chic* and abandon very fascinating to his own sensuous nature, a song with a charming air and sentiment. It was after a night at the opera, when they had seen her in “Lucia,” and the contrast, as she sang in his garden, softly lighted, showed her at the most attractive angles. She drifted from a sparkling chanson to the delicate pathos of a song of De Musset’s.

Gaston responded to the artist; but to the woman—no! He had seen a new life, even in its abandon polite, fresh. It amused him, but

he could still turn to the remembrance of Delia without blushing, for he had come to this in the spirit of the idler, not of the libertine.

Mademoiselle Cérise said to Ian at last,—

“*Enfin*, is the man stone? As handsome as a leopard, too! *Voilà*, it is no matter!”

But she made another effort to interest him. It galled her that he did not fall at her feet as others had done. Even Ian had come there in his day, but she knew him too well. She had said to him at the time,—

“You, monsieur? No, thank you. A week, a month, and then the brute in you would out. You make a woman fond, and then—a mat for your feet, and your wicked smile, and savage English words to drive her to the vitriol or the Seine. *Et puis*, dear monsieur, accept my good friendship, nothing more. I will sing to you, dance to you, even pray for you,—we poor sinners do that sometimes, and go on sinning; but, again, nothing more.”

Ian admired her all the more for her refusal of him, and they had been good friends. He had told her of his nephew's coming, had hinted at his fortune, at his primitive soul, at the unconventional strain in him, even at marriage. She could not read his purpose, but she knew there was something, and, answering him with a yes, had waited. Had Gaston come to her feet she would probably have got at the truth somehow, and have worked in his favor,—the joy vice takes to side with virtue, at times—when it is at no personal sacrifice. But Gaston was superior in a grand way. He was simple, courteous, interested only. This stung her, and she would bring him to his knees, if she could. This night she had rung all the changes, and had done no more than get his frank applause. She became petulant in an airy exacting way. She asked him about his horse. This interested him. She wanted to see it. To-morrow? No, no, now. Perhaps to-morrow she would not care to; there was no joy in deliberate pleasure. Now—now—now! He laughed. Well, now, as she wished.

Jacques was called. She said to him, “Come here, little comrade.” Jacques came. “Look at me,” she added. She fixed her eyes on him, and smiled. She was in the soft flare of the lights.

“Well,” she said, after a moment, “what do you think of me?”

Jacques was confused.

“Madame is beautiful.”

“The eyes?” she urged.

“I have been east to Gaspé, and west to Esquimalt, and in England, but I have never seen such as those,” he said. Race and primitive man spoke there.

She laughed. “Come closer, comrade.”

He did so. She suddenly rose, dropped her hands on his shoulders, and kissed his cheek.

“Now bring the horse, and I will kiss him too.”

Did she think she could rouse Gaston by kissing his servant? Yet it did not disgust him. He knew it was a bit of acting, and it was well done. Besides, Jacques Brillon was not a mere servant, and he, too, had done well. She sat back and laughed lightly when Jacques was gone. Then she said, “The honest fellow!” and hummed an air:

"The pretty coquette,
Well she needs to be wise,
Though she strike to the heart
By a glance of her eyes.
For the daintiest bird
Is the sport of the storm,
And the rose fadeth most
When the bosom is warm."

In twenty minutes the gate of the garden opened, and Jacques appeared with Saracen. The horse's black skin glistened in the lights, and he tossed his head and champed his bit. Gaston rose. Mademoiselle Cérise sprang to her feet and ran forward. Jacques put out his hand to stop her, and Gaston caught her shoulder.

"He's wicked with strangers," Gaston said.

"*Chut!*" she rejoined, stepped quickly to the horse's head, and, laughing, put out her hand to stroke him. Jacques caught the beast's nose, and stopped a lunge of the great white teeth.

"Enough, madame: he will kill you!"

"Yet I am beautiful,—is it not so?"

"The poor beast is ver' blind."

"A pretty compliment!" she rejoined, yet angry at the beast.

Gaston came, took the animal's head in his hands, and whispered. Saracen became tranquil. Gaston beckoned to Mademoiselle Cérise. She came. He took her hand in his and put it at the horse's lips. The horse whinnied angrily at first, but permitted a caress from the actress's fingers.

"He does not make friends easily," said Gaston.

"Nor does his master."

Her eyes lifted to his, the lids drooping suggestively.

"But when the pact is made——!"

"Till death us do part?"

"Death or ruin."

"Death is better."

"That depends."

"Ah! I understand," she said. "On—the woman?"

"Yes."

Then he became silent.

"Mount the horse," she urged.

Gaston sprang at one bound upon the horse's bare back. Saracen reared and wheeled.

"Splendid!" she said; then, presently, "Take me up with you."

He looked doubting for a moment, then whispered to the horse.

"Come quickly," he said.

She came to the side of the horse. He stooped, caught her by the waist, and lifted her up. Saracen reared, but Gaston had him down in a moment.

Ian Belward suddenly called out,—

"For God's sake, keep that pose for five minutes,—only five!" He caught up some canvas. "Hold candles near them," he said to the others. They did so. With great swiftness he sketched in the strange picture. It looked weird, almost savage,—Gaston's large

form, his legs loose at the horse's side, the woman in her white drapery clinging to him.

In a little time the artist said,—

"There, that will do. Ten such sittings, and my 'King of Ys' will have its day with the world. I'd give two fortunes for the chance of it!"

The woman's heart had beat fast with Gaston's arm around her. He felt the thrill of the situation. Man, woman, and horse were as of a piece.

But Cérise knew, when Gaston let her to the ground again, that she had not conquered.

CHAPTER XIV.

IN WHICH THE PAST IS REPEATED.

NEXT morning Gaston was visited by Meyerbeer, the American journalist, of whose profession he was still ignorant. He saw him only as a man of raw vigor of opinion, crude manners, and heavy temperament. He had not been friendly to him at night, and he was surprised at the morning visit. The hour was such that Gaston must ask him to breakfast. The two were soon at the table of the Hôtel St.-Malo. Meyerbeer sniffed the air when he saw the place. The linen was ordinary, the rooms small, but all—he did not take this into account—irreproachably clean. The walls were covered with pictures; some taken for unpaid debts, gifts from students who had since risen to fame or had gone into the outer darkness—to young artists' eyes, the sordid money-making world—and there been lost; from a great artist or two who remembered the days of his youth and the good host who had seen many little colonies of artists come and go.

They sat down to the table, which was soon filled with students and artists. Then Meyerbeer began to see not only an interesting thing, but "copy." He was, in fact, preparing a certain article which, as he said to himself, would "make 'em sit up" in London and New York. He had found out Gaston's history, had read his speech in the Commons, had seen paragraphs speculating as to where he was; and now he, Salem Meyerbeer, would tell them what the wild fellow was doing. The Bullier, the cafés in the Latin Quarter, apartments in a humble street, dining for one-franc-fifty, supping with actresses, posing for the King of Ys with that actress in his arms,—all excellent in their way. But now there was needed an entanglement, intrigue, amour, and then America should shriek at his picture of one of the British aristocracy, and a gentleman of the Commons, "on the loose," as he put it.

He would head it

"ARISTOCRAT, POLITICIAN, LIBERTINE?"

Then under that he would put

"CAN THE ETHIOPIAN CHANGE HIS SKIN, OR THE
LEOPARD HIS SPOTS?"—*Jer.* xiii. 23.

The morality of such a thing? Morality only had to do with ruining a girl's name, or robbery. How did it concern this?

So, Mr. Meyerbeer kept his ears open. Presently one of the students said to Bagshot, a young artist,—

"How does the *dompoteuse* come on?"

"Oh, I think it's *chic* enough. She's magnificent. The color of her skin against the lion's was splendid to-day,—a regular rich gold, with a sweet stain of red,—like a leaf of maize in September. There's never been such a Una. I've got my chance; and if I don't pull it off,

"Wrap me up in my tarpaulin jacket,
And say a poor buffer lies low!"

"Get the jacket ready," put in a young Frenchman, sneering.

The Englishman's jaw hardened, but he replied, coolly,—

"What do you know about it?"

"I know enough. The Comte Ploaré visits her."

"How the devil does that concern my painting her?"

There was iron in Bagshot's voice.

"Who says you are *painting* her?"

The insult was conspicuous. Gaston quickly interposed. His clear strong voice rang down the table:

"Will you let me come and see your canvas some day soon, Mr. Bagshot? I remember your 'A Passion in the Desert,' at the Academy this year. A fine thing: the leopard was free and strong. As an Englishman, I am proud to meet you."

The young Frenchman stared. The quarrel had passed to a new and unexpected quarter. Gaston's large, solid body, strong face, and penetrating eyes were not to be sneered out of sight. The Frenchman, an envious, disappointed artist, had had in his mind a bloodless duel, to give a fillip to an unacquired fame. He had, however, been drinking. He flung an insolent glance to meet Gaston's steady look, and said,—

"The cock crows of his dunghill!"

Gaston looked at the landlord, then got up calmly and walked down the table. The Frenchman, expecting he knew not what, sprang to his feet, snatching up a knife; but Gaston was on him like a hawk, pinioning his arms and lifting him off the ground, binding his legs too, all so tight that the Frenchman squealed for breath.

"Monsieur," said Gaston to the landlord, "from the door or the window?"

Pelletier was pale. It was in some respects a quarrel of races. For French and English at the tables had got up and were eying each other. As to the immediate outcome of the quarrel there could be no doubt. The English and Americans could break the others to pieces; but neither wished that. The landlord decided the matter:

"Drop him from this window."

He pushed a shutter back, and Gaston dropped the fellow on the hard pavement,—a matter of five feet. The Frenchman got up raging, and made for the door; but this time he was met by Pelletier, who gave him his hat and bade him come no more. There was applause

from both English and French. The journalist chuckled: another column!

Gaston had acted with coolness and common sense; and when he sat down and began talking of the Englishman's picture again as if nothing had happened, the others followed, and the dinner went on cheerfully.

Presently another young English painter entered, and listened to the conversation, which Gaston brought back to Una and the lions. It was his way to force things to his liking, if possible; and he wanted to hear about the woman: why, he did not ask himself. The new arrival, Fancourt by name, kept looking at him quizzically. Gaston presently said that he would visit the menagerie and see this famous *dompteuse* that afternoon.

"She's a brick!" said Bagshot. "I was in debt, a year behind with my Pelletier here, and it took all I got for the 'Passion in the Desert' to square up. I'd nothing to go on with. I spent my last sou in visiting the menagerie. There I got an idea. I went to her, told her how I was fixed, and begged her to give me a chance. By jingo! she brought the water to my eyes. Some think she's a bit of a devil; but she can be a devil of a saint, that's all I've got to say!"

"Zoug-Zoug's responsible for the devil," said Fancourt to Bagshot.

"Shut up, Fan," rejoined Bagshot, hurriedly, and then whispered to him quickly.

Fancourt sent self-conscious glances down the table towards Gaston; and then a young American, newly come to Paris, said,—

"Who's Zoug-Zoug, and what's Zoug-Zoug?"

"It's milk for babes, youngster," answered Bagshot, quickly, and changed the conversation.

Gaston saw something strange in the little incident; but he presently forgot it for many a day, and then remembered it for many a day, when the wheel had spun through a wild arc.

When they rose from the table, Meyerbeer went to Bagshot, and said,—

"Say, who's Zoug-Zoug, anyway?"

Bagshot coolly replied,—

"I'm acting for another paper. What price?"

"Fifty dollars," in a low voice, eagerly.

Bagshot meditated.

"H'm, fifty dollars! Two hundred and fifty francs, or thereabouts. Beggarily!"

"A hundred, then."

Bagshot got to his feet, lighting a cigarette.

"Want to have a pretty story against a woman, and to smutch a man, do you? Well, I'm hard up; I don't mind gossip among ourselves; but sell the stuff to you—I'll see you damned first."

This was said sufficiently loud; and after that, Meyerbeer could not ask Fancourt: so he departed with Gaston, who courteously dismissed him, to his astonishment and regret, for he had determined to visit the menagerie with his quarry.

Gaston went to his apartments, and cheerily summoned Jacques.

"Now, little man, for a holiday! The menagerie,—lions, leopards, and a grand dompteuse,—and afterwards dinner with me at the *Café Blanche*. I want a blow-out of lions and that sort. I'd like to be a lion-tamer myself for a month, or as long as might be."

He caught Jacques by the shoulders: he had not done so since that memorable day at Ridley Court.

"See, Jacques, we'll do this every year.—Six months in England, and three months on the Continent,—in your France, if you like,—and three months in the out-of-the-wayest place, where there'll be big game. *Hidalgos* for six months, *Goths* for the rest."

A half-hour later they were in the menagerie. They sat near the doors where the performers entered. For a long time they watched the performance with delight, clapping and calling "bravo!" like boys. Presently the famous dompteuse entered,—*Mademoiselle Victorine*,—passing just below Gaston. He looked down, interested, at the supple, lithe creature making for the cages of lions in the amphitheatre. The figure struck him as familiar. Presently the girl turned, throwing a glance round the theatre. He caught the flash of the dark, piercing eyes, the luminous look, the face unpainted—in its own natural color: neither hot health nor paleness, but a thing to bear the light of day.

"*Andrée the gypsy!*" he said, in a low tone.

In less than two years this! Here was fame. A wanderer, an *Ishmael*, then, her handful of household goods and her father in the grasp of the law: to-day, *Mademoiselle Victorine*, queen of animal-tamers! And her name associated with Count *Ploaré*!

With Count *Ploaré*? Had it come to that? He remembered the look in her face when he bade her good-by. Impossible! Then, immediately he laughed. Why impossible? And why should he bother his head about it? People of this sort, *Mademoiselle Cérise*, *Madame Juliette*, *Mademoiselle Victorine*,—what were they to him, or to themselves?

There flashed through his brain three pictures: when he stood by the bedside of the old dying *Esquimaux* in Labrador and took a girl's hand in his; when among the flowers at *Peppingham* he heard *Delia* say, "Oh, *Gaston!* *Gaston!*" and *Alice's* face at midnight in the moonlit window at *Ridley Court*.

How strange this figure—spangled, gaudy, standing among her lions—seemed by these! To think of her, his veins thumping thus, was an insult to all three: to *Delia*, one unpardonable. And yet he could not take his eyes off her. Her performance was splendid. He was interested, speculative. She certainly had flown high; for, again, why should not a dompteuse be a decent woman? And here were money, fame of a kind, and an occupation that sent his blood bounding. A dompteur! He had tamed moose, and young mountain lions, and a catamount, and had had mad hours with pumas and Arctic bears; and he could understand how even he might easily pass from *M.P.* to dompteur. It was not intellectual, but it was power of a kind; and it was decent, and healthy, and infinitely better than playing the Jew in business, or keeping a tavern, or "shaving" notes, and all that. Truly, the woman was to be admired, for she was earning an honest

living; and no doubt they lied when they named her with Count Ploaré. He kept coming back to that—Count Ploaré! Why could they not leave these women alone? Did they think none of them virtuous? He would stake his life that Andrée—he would call her that—was as straight as the sun.

"What do you think of her, Jacques?" he said, suddenly.

"It is grand. *Mon Dieu*, she is wonderful!—and a face all fire!"

Presently she came out of the cage, followed by two great lions. She walked round the ring, a hand on the head of each, one growling, the other purring against her, with a ponderous kind of affection. She talked to them as they went, giving occasionally a deep purring sound like their own. Her talk never ceased. She looked at the audience, but only as in a dream. Her mind was all with the animals. There was something splendid in it; she herself was a noble animal; and she seemed entirely in place where she was. The lions were fond of her, and she of them; but the first part of her performance had shown that they could be capricious. A lion's love is but a lion's love after all,—and hers likewise, no doubt! The three seemed as one in their beauty, the woman superbly superior.

Meyerbeer, in a far corner, was still on the trail of his sensation. He thought that he might get an article out of it—with the help of Count Ploaré and Zoug-Zoug. Who was Zoug-Zoug? He exulted in her picturesqueness, and he determined to lie in wait. He thought it a pity that Count Ploaré was not an Englishman or an American; but it couldn't be helped. Yes, she was, as he said to himself, "a stunner." Meanwhile he watched Gaston, noted his intense interest.

Presently the girl stopped beside the cage. A chariot was brought out, and the two lions were harnessed to it. Then she called out another larger lion, which came unwillingly at first. She spoke sharply, and then struck him. He growled, but came on. Then she spoke softly to him, and made that peculiar purr, soft and rich. Now he responded, walked round her, coming closer, till his body made a half-circle about her, and his head was at her knees. She dropped her hand on it. Great applause rang through the building. This play had been quite accidental. But there lay one secret of the girl's success. She was original; she depended greatly on the power of the moment for her best effects, and they came at unexpected times.

It was at this instant that, glancing round the theatre in acknowledgment of the applause, her eyes rested mechanically on Gaston's box. There was generally some one important in that box,—from a foreign prince to a young gentleman whose proudest moment was to take off his hat in the Bois to the queen of a lawless court. She had tired of being introduced to princes. What could it mean to her? And for the young bloods, whose greatest regret was that they could not send forth a daughter of joy into the Champs-Élysées in her carriage, she had ever sent them about their business. She had no corner of pardon for them. She kissed her lions, she hugged the lion's cub that rode back and forth with her to the menagerie day by day, her companion in her modest apartments; but sell one of these kisses to a young gentleman of Paris, whose ambition was to master all the vices,

and then let the vices master him!—she had not come to that, though, as she said in some bitter moments, she had come far.

Count Ploaré,—there was nothing in that. A *blasé* man of the world, who had found it all not worth the bothering about, neither code nor people, he saw in this rich impetuous nature a new range of emotions, a brief return to the time when he tasted an open strong life in Algiers, in Tahiti. And he would laugh at the world by marrying her,—yes, actually marrying her, the *dompteuse*! Accident had let him render her a service, not unimportant, once at Versailles, and he had been so courteous and considerate afterwards that she had let him see her occasionally, but never yet alone. He soon saw that an amour was impossible. At last he spoke of marriage. She shook her head. She ought to have been grateful, but she was not. Why should she be? She did not know why he wished to marry her; but, whatever the reason, he was selfish. Well, she would be selfish. She did not care for him. If she married him, it would be because she was selfish: because of position, ease; for protection in this shameless Paris; and for a home, she who had been a wanderer since her birth.

It was mere bargaining. But at last her free, independent nature revolted. No: she had had enough of the chain, and the loveless hand of man, for three months that were burned into her brain: no more! If ever she loved,—all! But not the right for Count Ploaré to demand the affection she gave her lions freely.

The manager of the menagerie had tried for her affections, had offered a price for her friendship, and, failing, had become as good a friend as such a man could be. She even visited his wife occasionally, and gave gifts to his children; and the mother trusted her and told her her trials. And so the thing went on, and the people talked.

As we said, she turned her eyes to Gaston's box. Instantly they became riveted, and then a deep flush swept slowly up her face and burned into her splendid hair. Meyerbeer was watching through his opera-glasses. He gave an exclamation of delight.

"By the holy smoke, here's something!" he said aloud.

For an instant Gaston and the girl looked at each other intently. He made a slight sign of recognition with his hand, and then she turned away, gone a little pale now. She stood looking at her lions, as if trying to recollect herself. The lion at her feet helped her. He had a change of temper, and, possibly fretting under inaction, growled. At once she summoned him to get into the chariot. He hesitated, but did so. She put the reins in his paws and took her place behind. Then a robe of purple and ermine was thrown over her shoulders by an attendant; she gave a sharp command, and the lions came round the ring, to wild applause. Even a Parisian audience had never seen anything like this. It was amusing, too; for the coachman-lion was evidently disgusted with his task, and growled in a helpless kind of way.

As they passed Gaston's box, they were very near. The girl threw one swift glance; but her face was well controlled now. She heard, however, a whispered word come to her:

"Andrée!"

A few moments afterwards she retired, and the performance was

in other and less remarkable hands. Presently the manager himself came, and said that Mademoiselle Victorine would be glad to see Monsieur Belward if he so wished. Gaston left Jacques and went.

Meyerbeer noticed the move, and determined to see the meeting if possible. There was something in it, he was sure. He would invent an excuse, and make his way behind.

Gaston and the manager were in the latter's rooms, waiting for Victorine. Presently a messenger came, saying that Monsieur Belward would find Mademoiselle in her dressing-room. Thither Gaston went, accompanied by the manager, who, however, left him at the door, nodding good-naturedly to Victorine, and inwardly praying that there was no danger to his business: Victorine was a source of great profit. Yet he had failed himself, and all others had failed, in winning her: why should this man succeed, if that was his purpose?

There was present an elderly, dark-featured Frenchwoman, who was always with Victorine, vigilant, protective, loving her as her own daughter.

"Monsieur!" said Andrée, a warm color in her cheek.

Gaston shook her hand cordially and laughed:

"Mademoiselle—Andrée?"

He looked inquiringly.

"Yes, to you," she said.

"You have it all your own way, now,—isn't it so?"

"With the lions, yes. Please sit down. This is my dear keeper," she said, touching the woman's shoulder. Then, to the woman, "Annette, you have heard me speak of this gentleman?"

The woman nodded, and modestly touched Gaston's outstretched hand.

"Monsieur was kind once to my dear Mademoiselle," she said.

Gaston cheerily smiled:

"Nothing, nothing, upon my word!"

Presently he continued:

"Your father, what of him?"

She sighed, and shivered a little:

"He died in Auvergne three months after you saw him."

"And you?" He waved a hand towards the menagerie.

"It is a long story," she answered, not meeting his eyes. "I hated the Romany life. I became an artist's model, sickened of that,"—her voice went quickly here,—"joined a travelling menagerie, and became what I am. That in brief."

"You have done well," he said, admiringly, his face glowing.

"I am a successful dompteuse," she replied.

She then asked him who was his companion in the box. He told her. She insisted on sending for Jacques. Meanwhile they talked of her profession, of the animals. She grew eloquent. Jacques arrived, and suddenly remembered Andrée,—stammered, was put at his ease, and dropped into talk with Annette. Gaston fell into reminiscences of wild game, and talked intelligently, acutely, of her work. He must wait, she said, until the performance closed, and then she would show him the animals as a happy family. Thus a half-hour went by.

Meanwhile, Meyerbeer had asked the manager to take him to Mademoiselle, but was told that Victorine never gave information to journalists, and would not be interviewed. Besides, she had a visitor. Yes, Meyerbeer knew it,—Mr. Gaston Belward; but that did not matter. The manager thought it did matter. Then, with an idea of the future, Meyerbeer asked to be shown the menagerie thoroughly: he would write it up for England and America.

And so it happened that there were two sets of people inspecting the menagerie after the performance. Andrée let a dozen of the animals out,—lions, leopards, a tiger, and a bear,—and they gambolled round her playfully, sometimes quarrelling with each other, but brought up smartly by her voice and a little whip, which she always carried,—the only sign of professional life about her, though there was ever a dagger hid in her dress. For the rest, she looked a splendid gypsy.

Gaston suddenly asked if he might visit her. At the moment she was playing with the young tiger. She paused, was silent, preoccupied. The tiger, feeling neglected, caught her hand with its paw. Gaston whipped out his handkerchief and stanchied the blood. She wrapped the handkerchief quickly round her hand, and then, recovering herself, ordered the animals back into their cages. They trotted away, and the attendant locked them up. Meanwhile Jacques had picked up and handed to Gaston a letter, dropped when he drew out his handkerchief. It was one received two days before from Delia Gasgoyne. He had a pang of confusion, and hastily put it into his pocket.

Up to this time there had been no confusion in his mind. He was going back to do his duty; to marry the girl, union with whom would be an honor; to take his place in his kingdom. He had had no minute's doubt of that. It was necessary, and it should be done. The girl? Did he not admire her, honor her, care for her? Why, then, this confusion?

Andrée said to him that he might come the next morning for breakfast. She said it just as the manager and Meyerbeer passed her. Meyerbeer heard it, and saw the look in the faces of both: in hers, bewildered, warm, penetrating; in Gaston's, eager, glowing, bold, with a distant kind of trouble.

Here was a thickening plot for Paul Pry. He hugged himself. But who was Zoug-Zoug? If he could but get at that! He asked the manager, who said he did not know. He asked a dozen men that evening, but none knew. He would ask Ian Belward. What a fool not to have thought of him at first! He knew all the gossip of Paris, and was always communicative;—but was he, after all? He remembered now that the painter had a way of talking at discretion: he had never got any really good material from him. But he would try him in this.

So, as Gaston and Jacques travelled down the Boulevard Montparnasse, Meyerbeer was not far behind.

The journalist found Ian Belward at home, in a cynical indolent mood.

"Wherefore Meyerbeer?" he said, as he motioned the other to a chair and pushed over vermouth and cigarettes.

"To ask a question."

"One question? Come, that's penance! Aren't you lying, as usual?"

"No; one only. I've got the rest of it."

"Got the rest of it, eh? Nasty mess you've got, whatever it is, I'll be bound. What a nice mob you press fellows are!—wholesale scavengers!"

"That's all right.—This vermouth is good enough! Well, will you answer my question?"

"Possibly, if it's not personal. But Lord knows where your insolence may run! You may ask if I'll introduce you to a decent London club!"

Meyerbeer flushed at last.

"You're rubbing it in," he said, angrily. He did wish to be introduced to a good London club. "The question isn't personal, I guess. It's this: who's Zoug-Zoug?"

Smoke had come trailing out of Belward's nose, his head thrown back, his eyes on the ceiling. It stopped, and came out of his mouth in one long, straight whiff. Then the painter brought his head to a natural position slowly, and, looking with a furtive nonchalance at Meyerbeer, said,—

"Who is what?"

"Who's Zoug-Zoug?"

"That is your one solitary question, is it?"

"That's it."

"Very well. Now I'll be scavenger. What is the story? Who is the woman?—for you've got a woman in it, that's certain."

"Will you tell me then whether you know Zoug-Zoug?"

"Yes."

"The woman is Mademoiselle Victorine, the *dompteuse*."

"Oh! I've not seen her yet. She burst upon Paris while I was away. Now, straight: no lies: who are the others?"

Meyerbeer hesitated; for of course he did not wish to speak of Gaston at this stage of the game. But he said,—

"Count Ploaré—and Zoug-Zoug."

"Why don't you tell me the truth?"

"I do. Now, who is Zoug-Zoug?"

"Find out."

"You said you'd tell me."

"No. I said I'd tell you if I knew Zoug-Zoug. I do."

"That's all you'll tell me?"

"That's all. And see, scavenger, take my advice and let Zoug-Zoug alone. He's a man of influence; and he's possessed of a devil. He'll make you sorry if you meddle with him."

He rose, and Meyerbeer did the same, saying,—

"You'd better tell me."

"Now, don't bother me. Drink your vermouth, take that bundle of cigarettes, and hunt Zoug-Zoug elsewhere. If you find him, let me know. Good-by."

Meyerbeer went out furious. The treatment had been too heroic.

"I'll give a sweet savor to your family name," he said, with an oath, as he shook his fist at the closed door.

Ian Belward sat back and looked at the ceiling reflectively.

"H'm!" he said at last. "What the devil does this mean? Not Andrée, surely not Andrée! Yet I wasn't called Zoug-Zoug before that. It was Bagshot's insolent inspiration at Auvergne. Well, well!"

He got up, drew over a portfolio of sketches, took out two or three, put them in a row against a divan, sat down, and looked at them half quizzically.

"It was rough on you, Andrée; but you were hard to please, and I am constant to but one. Yet, begad, you had solid virtues; and I wish, for your sake, I had been a different kind of fellow. Well, well, we'll meet again some time, and then we'll be good friends, no doubt."

He turned away from the sketches and picked up some illustrated newspapers. In one was a portrait. He looked at it, then at the sketches again and again.

"There's a resemblance," he said. "But no, it's not possible. Andrée—Mademoiselle Victorine! That would be amusing. I'd go to-morrow and see, if I weren't off to Fontainebleau. But there's no hurry: when I come back will do."

CHAPTER XV.

WHEREIN ARE SEEN THE OLD ADAM AND THE GARDEN.

AT Ridley Court and Peppingham all was serene to the eye. Letters had come to the Court at least once every two weeks from Gaston, and the minds of the baronet and his wife were at ease. They even went so far as to hope that he would influence his uncle; for it was clear to them both that whatever Gaston's faults were, they were agreeably different from Ian's. His fame and promise were sweet to their nostrils. Indeed, the young man had brought the wife and husband nearer than they had been since Robert vanished over-sea. Each had blamed the other in an indefinite, secret way; but here was Robert's son, on whom they could lavish—as they did—their affection, long since forfeited by Ian. Finally, one day, after a little burst of thanksgiving, on getting an excellent letter from Gaston, telling of his simple, amusing life in Paris, Sir William sent him a thousand pounds, begging him to buy a small yacht, or to do what he pleased with it.

"A very remarkable man, my dear," Sir William said, as he enclosed the cheque. "Excellent wisdom—excellent!"

"Who could have guessed that he knew so much about the poor, and the East End, and all those social facts and figures?" Lady Belward answered, complacently.

"An unusual mind, with a singular taste for history, and yet a deep observation of the present. I don't know when and how he does it. I really do not know."

"It is nice to think that Lord Faramond approves of him."

"Most noticeable. And we have not been a Parliamentary family

since the first Charles's time. And then it was a Sir Gaston! Singular!—quite singular! Coincidences of looks and character. Nature plays strange games. Reproduction—reproduction.”

“The *Pall Mall Gazette* says that Lord Faramond thinks he may yet reach the Treasury Bench.”

Sir William was abstracted. He was thinking of that afternoon in Gaston's bedroom when his grandson had acted, before Lady Dargan and Cluny Vosse, Sir Gaston's scene with Buckingham.

“Really, most mysterious, most unaccountable. But it's one of the virtues of having a descent. When it is most needed, it counts, it counts.”

“Against the half-breed mother,” Lady Belward added.

“Quite so, against the—was it Cree or Blackfoot? I've heard him speak of both, but which is in him I do not remember.”

“It is very painful; but, poor fellow, it is not his fault, and we ought to be content.”

“Indeed, it gives him great originality. Our old families need refreshing now and then.”

“Ah, yes: I said so to Mrs. Gasgoyne the other day, and she replied that the refreshment might prove intoxicating. Reine was always rude.”

Truth is, Mrs. Gasgoyne was not quite satisfied. That very day she said to her husband,—

“You men always stand by each other; but I know you, and you know that I know.”

“‘Thou knowest the secrets of our hearts:’ well, then, you know how we love you. So be merciful.”

“Nonsense, Warren! I tell you he oughtn't to have gone when he did. He has the wild man in him, and I am not satisfied.”

“What do you want?—me to play the spy?”

“Warren, you're a fool! What do I want? I want the first of September to come quickly, that we may have him with us. With Delia he must go straight. She influences him, he admires her,—which is better than mere love. Away from her just now, who can tell what mad adventure——! You see, he has had the curb so long.”

But in a day or two there came a letter—unusually long for Gaston—to Mrs. Gasgoyne herself. It was simple, descriptive, with a dash of epigram. It acknowledged that he had felt the curb and wanted a touch of the unconventional. It spoke of Ian Belward in a dry phrase, and it asked for the date of the yacht's arrival at Gibraltar.

“Warren, the man is still sensible,” she said. “This letter is honest. He is much a heathen at heart, but I believe he hasn't given Delia cause to blush; and that's a good deal. Dear me, I am fond of the fellow, he is so clever. But clever men are trying.”

As for Delia, like every sensible English girl, she enjoyed herself in the time of youth, drinking in delightedly the interest attaching to Gaston's betrothed. His letters had been regular, kind yet not emotionally affectionate, interesting, uncommon. He had a knack of saying as much in one page as most people did in five. Her imagination was not great, but he stimulated it. If he wrote a pungent line on

Daudet or Whistler, on Montaigne or Fielding, she was stimulated to know them. One day he sent her Whitman's "Leaves of Grass," which he had picked up in New York on his way to England. This startled her. She had never heard of Whitman. To her he seemed coarse, incomprehensible, ungentlemanly. She could not understand how Gaston could say beautiful things about Montaigne and about Whitman too. She had no conception how he had in him the strain of that first Sir Gaston Belward and was also the son of a half-heathen.

He interested her all the more. Her letters were hardly so fascinating to him. She was beautifully correct, but she could not make a sentence breathe. He was grateful, but nothing stirred in him. He could live without her,—that he knew regretfully. But he did his part with sincere intention.

That was up to the day when he saw Andrée as Mademoiselle Victorine. Then came a swift change. Day after day he visited her, always in the presence of Annette. Soon they dined often together, still in Annette's presence, and the severity of that rule was never relaxed.

Count Ploaré came no more: he had received his dismissal. Occasionally Gaston visited the menagerie, but generally after the performance, when Victorine had a half-hour's or an hour's romp with her animals. This was a pleasant time to Gaston. The wild life in him responded.

These were hours when the girl was quite naïve and natural, when she spent herself in ripe enjoyment,—almost child-like, healthy. At other times there was an indefinable something which Gaston had not noticed in England. But then he had seen her only once. She, too, saw something in him unnoticed before. It was on his tongue a hundred times to tell her that that something was Delia Gasgoyne. He did not; perhaps because it seemed so grotesque, perhaps because it was easier to drift. Besides, as he said to himself, he would soon go to join the yacht at Gibraltar, and all this would be over—over. All this? All what? A gypsy, a *dompteuse*,—what was she to him? She interested him, he liked her, and she liked him, but there had been nothing more between them. Near as he was to her now, he very often saw her in his mind's eye as she passed over Ridley Common, looking towards him, her eyes shaded by her hand.

She, too, had continually said to herself that this man could be nothing to her,—nothing, never! Yet why not? Count Ploaré had offered her his hand. But she knew what had been in Count Ploaré's mind. Gaston Belward was different; he had befriended her father. She had not singular scruples regarding men, for she despised most of them. She was not a Mademoiselle Cérise, nor a Madame Juliette, though they were higher on the plane of Art than she; or so the world put it. She had not known another man who had not, one time or another, shown himself common or insulting. But since the first moment she had seen Gaston he had treated her as a lady.

A lady? She had seen enough to smile at that. She knew that she hadn't it in her veins, that she was very much an actress, except

in this man's company, when she was mostly natural,—as natural as one can be who has a painful secret. They had talked together—for how many hours? She knew exactly. And he had never descended to that which, she felt instinctively, he would not have shown to the ladies of his English world. She knew what ladies were. In her first few weeks in Paris, her fame mounting, she had lunched with some distinguished people, who entertained her as they would have done one of her lions, if that had been possible. She understood. She had a proud, passionate nature; she rebelled at this. Invitations were declined, at first on pink note-paper with gaudy flowers in a corner, afterwards on cream-laid vellum, when she saw what the great folk did.

And so the days went on, he telling her of his life from his boyhood up,—all but the one thing! But that one thing she came to know, partly by instinct, partly by something he accidentally dropped, partly from something Jacques once said to him. Well, what did it matter to her? He would go back; she would remain. It didn't matter. Yet why should she lie to herself? It did matter. And why should she care about that girl in England? She was not supposed to know. The other had everything in her favor: what had Andrée the gypsy girl, or Mademoiselle Victorine the dompteuse?

One Sunday evening, after dining together, she asked him to take her to see Saracen. It was a long-standing promise. She had never seen him riding; for their hours did not coincide until the late afternoon or evening. Taking Annette, they went to his new apartments. He had furnished a large studio as a sitting-room, not luxuriantly, but pleasantly. It opened into a pretty little garden with a few plants and trees. They sat there while Jacques went for the horse. Next door a number of students were singing a song of the boulevards. It was followed by one in a woman's voice, sweet and clear and passionate, pitifully reckless. It was, as if in pure contradiction, the opposite of the other,—simple, pathetic. At first there were laughing interruptions from the students; but the girl kept on, and soon silence prevailed, save for the voice:

“And when the wine is dry upon the lip,
And when the flower is broken by the hand,
And when I see the white sails of thy ship
Fly on, and leave me there upon the sand,
Think you that I shall weep? Nay, I shall smile:
The wine is drunk, the flower it is gone.
One weeps not when the days no more beguile:
How shall the tear-drops gather in a stone?”

When it was ended, Andrée, who had listened intently, drew herself up with a little shudder. She sat long, looking into the garden, the cub playing at her feet. Gaston did not disturb her. He got refreshments and put them on the table, rolled a cigarette, and regarded the scene. Her knee was drawn up slightly in her hands, her hat was off, her rich brown hair fell loosely about her head, framing it, her dark eyes glowed under her bent brows. The lion's cub crawled up on the divan, and thrust its nose under an arm. Its head clung to her waist.

Who was it? thought Gaston. Delilah, Cleopatra—who? She was lost in thought. She remained so until the garden door opened, and Jacques entered with Saracen.

She looked. Suddenly she came to her feet with a cry of delight, and ran out towards the horse. There was something essentially child-like in her, something also painfully wild,—an animal, and a philosopher, and twenty-three!

Jacques put out his hand as he had done with Mademoiselle Cérise.

"No, no: he is savage."

"Nonsense!" she rejoined, and came closer.

Gaston watched, interested. He guessed what she would do.

"A horse!" she added. "You have seen my lions! Leave him free: stand away from him."

Her words were peremptory, and Jacques obeyed. The horse stood alone, a hoof pawing the ground. Presently it sprang away, then half turned towards the girl, and stood still. She kept talking to him and calling softly, making a coaxing, animal-like sound, as she always did with lions.

She stepped forward a little and paused. The horse suddenly turned straight towards her, came over slowly, and, with arched neck, dropped his head on her shoulder. She felt the folds of his neck and kissed him. He followed her about the garden like a dog. She brought him to Gaston, looked up, and said, with a teasing look,—

"I have conquered him: he is mine!"

Gaston looked her in her eyes:

"He is yours."

"And you?"

"He is mine." His look burned into her soul: how deep, how joyful!

She turned away, her face going suddenly pale. She kept the horse for some time, but at last gave him up again to Jacques. Gaston stepped from the door-way into the garden and met her. It was now dusk. Annette was inside. They walked together in silence for a time. Presently she drew close to him. He felt his veins bounding. Her hand slid into his arm, and, dark as it was, he could see her eyes lifting to his, shining, profound. They had reached the end of the garden, and now turned to come back again.

Suddenly he said, his eyes holding hers,—

"The horse is yours—and mine!"

She stood still; but he could see her bosom heaving hard. She threw up her head with a sound half sob, half laugh.

"You are mad!" she said, a moment afterwards, as she lifted her head from his breast.

He laughed softly, catching her cheek to his.

"Why be sane? It was to be."

"The gypsy and the gentleman?"

"Gypsies all!"

"And the end of it?"

"Do you not love me, Andrée?"

She caught her hands over her eyes.

"I do not know what it is—only that it is madness! I see—oh, I see a hundred things!"

Her hot eyes were on space.

"What do you see?" he urged.

She gave a sudden cry:

"I see you at my feet—dead!"

"Better than you at mine, dearest."

"Let us go," she said, hurriedly.

"Wait," he whispered.

They talked for a little time. Then they entered the studio. Annette was asleep in her chair. Andrée waked her, and they bade Gaston good-night.

Gilbert Parker.

(To be concluded.)

AN ECHO.

I made the cross myself whose weight
Was later laid on me:
This thought adds anguish as I toil
Up life's steep Calvary.

ANNE REEVE ALDRICH.

I DID not make my cross myself:
Its weight was laid on me
By those I love, who led the way
To my Gethsemane.

Ah, less of anguish, as I bowed
Beneath the load I bear,
If but one nail my hands had driven
To merit past despair.

If they had known, if they had dreamed,
The weight they laid on me,
I know they would have shared my load
"Up life's steep Calvary."

I never thought the time was near
When I could lay it down;
I never thought my cross could change
Into a jewelled crown.

But now the summit I've attained,
Its weight is lightened there;
And lo, my cross becomes a crown!
A conqueror's crown I wear!

Clara Jessup Moore.

FITZ-JAMES O'BRIEN AND HIS TIME.

A GLANCE at the literary career of Fitz-James O'Brien is useful and entertaining in that it includes a view of magazine literature in its essentially formative period during the first decade of the half-century now closing.

O'Brien, with William North, came to New York in 1852. North affected to trace his lineage to Lord North, the famous minister of George III. O'Brien was reticent as to his ancestry. He was a young Irishman from Dublin, who had served in some capacity in the British army and had afterwards drifted to London, where he had written for the "penny-dreadfuls," and later for *All the Year Round*.

He called on me in June, 1852, with some manuscripts to sell. They consisted of short stories, and collections of verselets, light, fanciful, airy,—just such as a young man with a fair amount of training could throw off by the ream "between the sleep and wake." The sketches had no relations to each other, and had the appearance of being débris, perhaps rejections from *All the Year Round*. But they were not without merit, and their grace of diction was unmistakable. I agreed to take them for the *American Review*, of which I was then editor, and, under the title of "Fragments from an Unpublished Magazine," they were published continuously during the ensuing six months. Perhaps a search in the dust-bins of American literature might bring to light the concluding volumes of the *American Review*. If so, the finder would discover from fifty to sixty pages of sketches, stories, and songs anonymously sent into the world, but in reality written by the author of "The Diamond Lens."

Aside from "The Diamond Lens," which originally appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*, O'Brien wrote little of real artistic worth. His literary attitude is much like the Parliamentary attitude of "Single-Speech Hamilton:" one made but one speech, the other wrote but one story, since whatever else he wrote was ephemeral and valueless.

Magazines at that time, in the United States at least, were few in number and deficient in grasp. The *Atlantic Monthly* in Boston was not born until 1857, and the *North American Review* appeared only at intervals of three months, and was known and read by only a select few of heroic subscribers. In New York we had only the *American Review* and the *Democratic Review*. It was the former that paid Poe twelve dollars for the "Raven," although he begged hard for fifteen. Poe's *Broadway Journal* was dead; the Philadelphia magazines and the *Southern Literary Messenger* at Richmond could not absorb his manuscripts, and several of his stories were published in the *American Review* at the rate of two dollars a page of eight hundred words. A "space writer" on a daily paper receives now from six to eight dollars for a column of sixteen hundred words: so that the author of "A Trip through the Bowery" in the *Morning Hash-Pot* earns twice as much per word as the author of "The Fall of the House of Usher."

In Philadelphia there were three monthly magazines devoted to ladies' fashions and literature,—*Graham's*, *Godey's*, and *Sartain's*. Much good matter appeared in these monthlies: it was paid at the rate of three dollars a page, after publication,—sometimes a good while after. I once waited three months for the payment for a seven-page story, and finally made a sight draft for twenty-one dollars, which fortunately got itself paid. *Graham's* published several of Poe's best stories, but Poe finally quarrelled with the proprietor, just as he quarrelled with everybody. Poe was essentially an unhappy man, and although when he died the world lost a genius, the smaller social world in which he had lived gained a lasting respite from a positive annoyance.

Outside these few magazines there was no market in the United States for that brilliant intellectual product known as "magazine stories," in which term publishers include all the matter that lies between the covers of a monthly, whether biography, sketch of travel, essay, or fiction. We have seen that the prices paid in this market were not such as to attract talent and to furnish a livelihood to men and women who set out to make bread-winners of their literary abilities. And yet at the very time when magazine-writers were starving on insufficient wages, the *Ledger* was paying Sylvanus Cobb, of Boston, ten thousand dollars a year for a few chapters each week of a series of tame novels which each of these magazines would have declined as "unavailable." At this time, too, "Ruth Hall" and "The Lamplighter" were selling by the ten thousand. It was one of those cases in which, since the market had not yet been created, the unfortunate people whose wares were adapted to just such a market found themselves neglected and underpaid.

Poe (who was not, strictly speaking, a bohemian), North, O'Brien, Fitz-Hugh Ludlow, and others who were in every sense of the word bohemians, lived, worked, and died precisely at this unhappy season between hay and grass. These men were qualified for magazine-writing, and for nothing else. They were without professional education, they were not competent journalists, they would have been worthless as reporters, and thus were from the very nature of the case flung into a seething gulf, whose woes could be compared only to those of the prisoners in the Malebolge depicted by Dante. In this gulf their environment was made up of debt, dishonor, falsehood, mortification, unrequited labor, dissipation, and death. We know how Poe died; North committed suicide; Ludlow succumbed to opium; and O'Brien flung away his life in one of the early battles of the civil war. He enlisted for the purpose of being killed, and in a few weeks his purpose was accomplished.

Whether men so constituted *could* live honest lives is a question which it is not easy to answer. Given a young man of good birth and breeding, of a lively fancy, fond of society and of all the agreeable features that follow in the train of social refinement, let him write a thousand words a day, the highest pay for which shall be five dollars, and let him be able to sell, and get paid for, only one-half of this product, is it a supposable case that he will not begin to prey on society,

—to borrow money and not return it, to leave unpaid his tailor, boot-maker, and landlady, to squander his money in drinking-shops, to obtain advances from publishers on manuscripts which are not written and never will be, to sell duplicate drafts against manuscripts that have been delivered and accepted? This grisly list of frauds might be lengthened, but it is too long already. And yet it does not begin to exhaust the catalogue of petty crimes committed by the literary bohemians of the decade from 1850 to 1860.

Since these men were not born with natural tendencies to fraud, it is only fair to infer that they committed these petty villanies because they could not see their way to a reasonable enjoyment of life on other terms. And they failed to get a reasonable enjoyment of life after all.

Great changes have taken place since their day. The number of magazines has increased enormously, and the prices paid by publishers for accepted articles enable writers of approved merit to live as well as the majority of professional people. Of course the magazines of the United States cannot buy all the manuscripts which are produced; but it is a fair estimate that only one-tenth of what is produced is fit to be bought, and that of that tenth one-half is actually bought and liberally paid for. Literary bohemianism is now merely a tradition. In this fact lies the sole value of this reminiscence.

Champion Bissell.

HER CONCERT.

MISS ALICIA was washing her supper-dishes when the newsboy tossed her paper with a whack against the door. She could scarcely afford a paper, but she considered it one's duty to keep in touch with the world's events; and, besides, Miss Simkins, the little dress-maker across the hall, enjoyed it so much.

"I wonder what action Congress has taken to-day," thought Miss Alicia, wiping her cream-pitcher. There was something pathetic in the way this old woman in her two rooms lived in the reflected glory of her country. And if the reflection grew dim at times when the winter was severe and coal was high, yet Miss Alicia's eyes were not as strong as they used to be, and she was content. She put away the last dish and went out for the paper. Somehow one of the special notices attracted her attention; she took off her glasses and rubbed them and read the notice again:

"To-night! Grand Organ Recital!
All are invited.
St. James's Church."

She looked up in a little flurry of delight. "That is the result of such a country as ours! The best music for every one! How I shall

enjoy it!—I haven't heard anything like it for years. I must tell Miss Simkins: she gets out so seldom."

She hurried across the hall with the paper in her hands. Her hands were actually trembling, and there was a touch of color in each withered cheek. How foolish she was! But then it would be such a treat!

The little dress-maker listened sympathizingly.

"I'm real glad for you, Miss Alicia, but I can't go. I've got extra work that must be finished to-night. You must tell me all about it. You know I can't appreciate good music as you can," she added, generously, as she saw the disappointment in Miss Alicia's face. "Now you go right off and get ready. I'm glad 'tain't far for you to walk. And don't mind me a speck. I can set here and hear it when you get home."

Miss Alicia's face brightened, and she hurried back to her room. She took out her best bonnet and shawl. There was a tiny rip in one of her black silk gloves; she mended it as carefully as she could when the light tried her eyes so badly. "And a fan!" she exclaimed, suddenly. "Dear me, I almost forgot: it's so long since I've been to concerts." She went to a drawer, and, taking out an old black fan, carefully rolled in tissue-paper, opened it admiringly. "There!" she said, "I guess I'm ready now."

She looked in to tell Miss Simkins good-by.

"Dear me! how spruce you look!" said the little dress-maker, brightly. "Now mind you tell me all about it. Good-by. I must get to work." But she didn't go to work immediately; she stood at the window some moments, looking wistfully down the street.

Miss Alicia walked on quickly. It made her nervous to be in the streets alone at night, so she followed closely after a gay group with several young girls. "Maybe they're going there too," thought Miss Alicia. "I wonder what the selections will be. Oh, I do hope there will be one of Beethoven's sonatas. It has been so many years since I've heard any Beethoven."

It seemed a very few minutes before the church was in sight, its windows warmly glowing with color, and people hurrying in the open doors. As she drew nearer she noticed that most of the people held bits of blue cardboard. A strange fear seized her: she felt almost faint. She hastened a little and entered the portico with the group of girls: they, too, had bits of blue cardboard. One of the girls felt a trembling touch on her arm and looked around half impatiently. An old woman stood beside her and was speaking to her: "Do you—do you all have tickets, my dear?"

"Why, of course," answered the girl, as she hurried on with the crowd.

Miss Alicia stood a minute or two as if she was stunned; then she turned and walked slowly back up the street. The way seemed very long and tiresome.

Dorothy E. Nelson.

THE LONELY-BIRD.

IN THE ADIRONDACKS.

O DAPPLED throat of white! Shy, hidden bird!
 Perched in green dimness of the dewy wood,
 And murmuring, in that lonely, lover mood,
 Thy heart-ache, softly heard,
 Sweetened by distance, over land and lake.

Why, like a kinsman, do I feel thy voice
 Awaken voices in me free and sweet?
 Was there some far ancestral birdhood fleet
 That rose and would rejoice:
 A broken cycle rounded in a song?

The lake, like steady wine in a deep cup,
 Lay crystal in the curving mountain deeps;
 And now the air brought that long lyric up
 That sobs, then falls and weeps,
 And hushes silence into listening hope.

Is it that we were sprung of one old kin,
 Children of brooding earth, that lets us tell,
 Thou from thy rhythmic throat, I deep within,
 These syllables of her spell,
 This hymned wisdom of her pondering years?

For thou hast spoken song-wise, in a tongue
 I knew not till I heard the buried air
 Burst from the boughs and bring me what thou sung,
 Here where the lake lies bare
 To reaching summits and the azure sky.

Thy music is a language of the trees,
 The brown soil, and the never-trodden brake;
 Translatress art thou of dumb mysteries
 That dream through wood and lake;
 And I, in thee, have uttered what I am!

Harrison S. Morris.

GENIUS AT HOME.

SO much has been written and said of the unhappy marriages of men of genius, from Socrates to Shakespeare and from Shakespeare to our own time, that it seems fitting that some voice should be raised in vindication of such rays of domestic happiness as have from time to time lighted the paths of some of the more highly endowed sons of Adam.

Socrates and his Xantippe are so enshrouded in the mists of the past that it seems impossible to extricate the philosopher from the marital infelicity to which history and fiction have relegated him. The tradition that Shakespeare's home was not a happy one has been honored by many years of credence; but within a short time our greatest Shakespearian scholar, Dr. Horace Howard Furness, has thrown the weight of his testimony in favor of the domestic happiness of the poet, and, in the course of some ingenious arguments in support of his theory, he sweeps aside the seeming slight of the legacy to Mrs. Shakespeare "of a second best feather bed" upon the supposition that she already possessed the best one, with the other household goods, by right of dower.

Not less ingenious are the arguments which Mr. Hitchcock has brought forward in support of his theory that men of genius have usually been unhappy in their marriages, in confirmation of which he cites the experiences of Goethe, Count Cavour, Gibbon, Mozart, and others.

The loves of the great German poet were so various, and of such brief duration, that they carry little weight in the way of argument, while Count Cavour's attachment to the fair "Unknown," like that of Gibbon to Mademoiselle Curchod, was of so transient and calculating a nature that it scarcely deserves to be dignified by the name of love. The fair Unknown wasted her affection upon one who was incapable of appreciating it, and the great historian, who was able to philosophize upon love in concrete phrase, revealed the flimsy nature of his own emotion by putting aside for worldly considerations the tender affection that breathes from every line written by the charming Swiss girl who afterwards became Mme. Necker. Mozart's love for Aloysia Weber has in it some notes even more touching than are to be found in his music,—his attachment to her was so ardent and sincere, and hers for him so trifling and evanescent, being sensibly diminished by an absence of less than a twelvemonth and by his appearance in a coat whose cut and trimmings did not happen to suit her fancy. "On such trifles," says Mr. Hitchcock, "hangs men's success with women, especially with women of Aloysia's age and character." Had the lover been other than Mozart, we might almost sympathize with Aloysia in her disapproval of the curious costume in which the young composer was mourning for his mother, a black coat with scarlet buttons; but in Mozart such a want of taste might have been forgiven,

especially as we are told that this was the latest Parisian style for mourning.

As a reverse to these and other pictures projected for argument's sake, there rise up before us a glorified host of men of genius who have been supremely happy in their loves, as if to prove that conjugal happiness is by no means incompatible with mental endowments of the highest order. No fairer picture of domestic felicity presents itself to the mind than that of the Wordsworths, living at Grasmere or at Rydal Mount the quiet and studious life that has made "plain living and high thinking" a golden proverb among English-speaking people and has enriched the language with some of its loveliest pastorals. In the poet's work the fair young wife was not only an appreciative companion, but an inspiration, as Wordsworth, who was never distinguished for his modesty with regard to his own achievements, acknowledges his indebtedness to her, especially for those most exquisite lines in "The Daffodils:"

They flash upon the inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude.

Of the domestic life of the Lowells, all that has come to us, and all that we can gather of the character and genius of Maria White, make us ready to subscribe to Dr. E. E. Hale's opinion that this marriage "was one of the events determined on in heaven, which give joy on earth to all who see and know." Something beyond ordinary happiness must have blessed this union of less than ten years' duration, and something approaching the ideal bliss of the Browning marriage more nearly than any other that occurs to our mind. Each of these poets found in his wife a high inspiration, and each acknowledged his debt to her in the most graceful tributes that are to be found in the language. "Unions such as men and angels delight in" were these, in which such joys of companionship as are possible only to the nobler ones of earth were experienced by these two couples, the one in the old palace of the Cæsars, the other in the less classic setting of what was then a country home, at Elmwood. Another instance of perfect congeniality of mind and taste is to be found in the long friendship and final marriage of John Stuart Mill and Mrs. Taylor, which was of so ideal a nature that his own noble tributes to her character and abilities best reveal what association with her meant to him and to his life and work.

It seems from these and many other instances that, notwithstanding a popular and time-honored theory that men of genius are better off when married to women of exclusively domestic talents, the highest examples of happiness are to be found only where there is some similarity of tastes, habits, and acquirements. It will, of course, be urged in opposition to this theory that all through history superior men have been happily married to women of very moderate ability, which does not at all preclude the possibility that they might have reached a higher degree of happiness had they been more congenially mated. Men of genius, especially those in whom the ideal faculty

overbalances the reasoning and perceptive powers, as a rule bring but a small amount of common sense into this the most important of all choices in life. Shakespeare told us long ago why "wing'd Cupid was painted blind," making haste to explain that although the lover saw only "with the mind," this same mind was bereft of "judgment, taste,"

And therefore is Love said to be a child,
Because in choice he is so oft beguiled.

That a man of superior mental gifts should be thus beguiled into endowing some very ordinary maid or matron with all imaginable graces and virtues is not surprising, but that he should continue to be happy under such circumstances is often a wonder to gods and men. Doubtless the same ideal faculty that leads such a man to gild with imaginary charms the object of his choice enables him to keep these blissful early illusions fresh and green through long years of work-a-day wear. The most blessed of endowments is this, to which is often added, in men of a higher stamp, a certain fine strain of loyalty which means much more than a philosophical acceptance of the inevitable. Such men are not unhappy, because they have always the germ of true joy within them. Walter Scott's married life seems to have been an instance of this sort of conjugal content. From all that we know of the novelist and his wife, we are impressed with the fact that the eagle had found a mate who could never soar with him into any height mental or spiritual; yet Scott's married life seems to have been a comparatively happy one, and through all his letters there are charming allusions to his Charlotte, which have in them the ring of truth. Sometimes, especially in the more intimate expressions of the *Journal* published a few years since, there is an unconscious note of condescension, of the greater mind bending to the less, as when, realizing the genuine childish delight that his wife would take in his newly-acquired title, he writes to her, in his own generous fashion, of the "gazetting of her new honors." Again, when troubles and disappointments crowded upon his latter years, he says, with regard to leaving Castle Street, "I am glad Lady Scott does not mind it, and yet I wonder too. She insists on my remaining till Wednesday, not knowing what I suffer." Yet a few days later, when she is threatened with a serious illness, Scott breaks forth in such loving, loyal expressions as this: "Lady Scott, the faithful and true companion of my fortunes, good and bad, for so many years;" and later, when his worst fears in regard to her health were realized, and his business difficulties became more complicated, he writes, "When I came home from such business I used to carry the news to poor Charlotte, who dressed her face in sadness or in mirth as she saw the news affect me." Conjugal happiness this was, of a certain sort, yet when contrasted with that which blessed such couples as the Lowells, the Brownings, and the Wordsworths, whose lives were "perfect music set to noble words," we realize that the word happiness is capable of being written with many shadings.

Anne Hollingsworth Wharton.

TALKS WITH THE TRADE.

RUDIMENTS.

"WHAT remuneration do you offer? We sometimes cannot afford to write simply to be seen in print. What is your price for the average short novel,—say one containing three short chapters? Also, what style of writing do you prefer? Is there any subject that you desire especially?—D. F."

The publishers of subscription books are said to provide classes for the all-round instruction of their agents in the field; but we unfortunately have none for intending contributors—they are supposed to learn what they need outside. If we were badly in want of contributions, the case would be different.

As to payment, of course all decent magazines pay for what they accept; but the rates concern only such as write what is wanted. After D. F.'s novel has arrived and been approved—the second event does not always follow on the heels of the first—he will learn what terms we offer. But it will have to contain a good many more than "three short chapters" to attain the dimensions and meet the definition of a novel, or even of a novelette. Can it be that D. F. means a short story? If so, short stories do not need chapters at all. Nobody reckons length in this way. Since chapters may be of any size, and pages vary greatly, the way to indicate dimension is by the (estimated) number of words.

"Enclosed find MS. If you wish to purchase, send check: if not, please return, and state why it is N. G.—W. T. B."

This sounds business-like, but its last request is not so at all. As we have explained before now, it is no part of the business of a magazine to "state why" particular MSS. are not accepted. And what right has W. T. B. to assume that his piece is worthless because it goes back to him? The fact means merely that we do not want it,—not that it may not be wanted elsewhere. The circular which takes the place of a letter in such cases is not always an empty form: in many cases other reasons than total lack of merit determine rejection.

"What sort of a letter should I write to accompany an article when I send you one?"

No letter at all is needed. The publishers and editors and clerks, and the messengers and office-boys and printers, know that you would like to have your piece accepted and paid for at the usual rates, and inserted in an early number, and all the rest of it. Write your full name and address on the MS., preferably at the top of it. The only other necessary item is the stamps to insure its safe return; in most cases they will be needed.

"I had poems in two Christmas magazines, *The Busy Bee* and *The Haymaker*. My name is in the announcements of these and of *Plympton's* for this year.—W. F. B."

These facts are interesting to you rather than important to us. What suits one magazine will not necessarily suit another, and we prefer to judge your verse, like that of anybody else, on its merits.

"I enclose a number of clippings (which please return) about myself and my work, to show you that I am not a novice.—M. E."

Please keep the clippings next time. Frankly, we don't care for them. Their only use would be in some office where the MSS. are left to a young assistant who has not yet learned his trade, and needs to have his judgment guided. We are not in that condition. You perhaps overrate the value of such success as is indicated by a few friendly newspaper notices. Only the large reputations command favorable attention: the little budding ones are very well in their way, but they insure no more consideration for a MS. than it will get anyway in a well-regulated office.

"You took a piece of mine before. Why do you send this one back?—X."

Probably because it isn't as good as the other. Your having been accepted once doesn't insure your getting in always. In this country all are born free and equal, and even our previous contributors stand on the same footing with the inglorious unknown, when it comes to determining the value of their offerings.

"Has your firm a critic who will review a brief story so as to ascertain whether the author could be encouraged, or frankly discountenanced, in future similar essays?—R. H."

This is an honest request, as between man and man. The writer is presumably in a secluded region, remote from competent advice as to the extent of his powers. Not in the way of business, but in the way of humanity, he is entitled to what he asks. His MS. will be passed upon in any case, and the editor can probably spare five minutes to give a brief and candid opinion.

It need not take more than five minutes, as a rule. Truth is here desired, not compliments. In nine cases out of ten there is no encouragement to be given: in his own interest and in that of the community, the writer must be "frankly discountenanced from future similar essays."

"Have I the right to call myself an author?—L."

That depends. An author is one whose writings have been published, and usually on a large scale or with some degree of success. The term is flexible, but it does not properly cover brief and unimportant contributions to the press, and it does not apply at all to those who are merely trying to get into print. By rights, it carries an idea of dignity and eminence: "the glory of a nation is its authors." Call yourself simply a writer: that sounds more modest. So, if you are wise, you will not speak of your "poem," but of your "verses." Don't try to wear the laurel till you have won it.

"I enclose a poem. Several other magazines also receive a copy. With the first one that offers to publish it, I will place an order for fifty copies of the number in which it appears.—Y."

That is a perilously attractive bait. Suppose several fish jump at it at once—i.e., several editors accept the poem—you would have to tell all of them but one that they can't have it: thus you would acquire one grateful friend and several mortal enemies. Better send the MS. (and the order) to one magazine at a time.

Books of the Month.

**The Mystery of the
Patrician Club.** By
Albert D. Vandam.

That skilful inventor of plots, Albert D. Vandam, to whom we owe *An Englishman in Paris*, has again brought forth a novel which will divert the most satiated reader of fiction.

Mr. Vandam belongs to the school which has produced Sherlock Holmes, and in many respects the Jasper Davenport of *The Mystery of the Patrician Club* is the double and peer of that inimitable arch-detective.

This is a story of the murder of a young Swiss waiter employed at the Patrician Club. The facts surrounding the crime are as inscrutable as they are sensational. It is known that a scene over the gambling-table had involved two of the members in an encounter, and that one had accused the other of cheating. These two were sworn enemies; but how to connect the circumstances with the death of the waiter is the problem which puzzles all the detectives save Jasper Davenport, who has, besides his enormous skill, a private hatred which he burns to satisfy. The deductions made in Davenport's mind and their rapid fulfilment in his actions; the wary counter-plots of Lord Brackelonde, almost his equal in acuteness, and more than his equal in unscrupulousness; the interwoven plots which connect the family of Lord Clovelly with the crime, and bring forth from Dick Clovelly a manly determination to stand by his sweetheart, who is the murderer's daughter,—all these elements in the hands of the inventive author become united in a story of irresistible fascination. The literary style is excellent, and the book is uniform with Miss Corelli's "Barabbas" and other English copyright novels recently issued by the Lippincotts.

**Dictionary of the
Active Principles of
Plants: Alkaloids,
Bitter Principles,
Glucosides.** By
Charles E. Sohn,
F.I.C., F.C.S.

The tendency of science is in the direction of system; and this very complete classification of the Alkaloids, Bitter Principles, and Glucosides is a step toward more comprehensive knowledge of *The Active Principles of Plants*, whose medicinal use came into being with the discoveries of Derosne and Sertürner at the beginning of the century.

The well-arranged *Dictionary*, an album-shaped volume of about two hundred pages, just issued conjointly by Baillière, Tindall & Co., London, and the J. B. Lippincott Co., treats of nearly six hundred of these constantly increasing substances, showing how given attributes may readily be found, and wherein each body differs from or resembles another of its class.

The Tannins. Vol.
II. By Henry
Trimble, Ph.M.

Nearly every one knows what tannin or its synonyme tannic acid is; most people know it through its valuable properties as a medicine. It has been found that tannin varies according to the plant from which it is obtained, so that now we are accustomed to consider it a member of a class known as *the tannins*. This has been made the subject of a monograph by Professor Henry Trimble, the first volume of which was issued about two years ago, and the second volume is now before us. The first volume was devoted to a general consideration

of the subject from the time when tannin was discovered, about a century ago, and to the one typical tannin obtained from nutgalls. The present volume deals with the tannins from nine species of oaks, and from one species each of mangrove, canaigre, and chestnut. These tannins have been traced by the author from their sources in the respective plants to their chemical composition, so that the book is made up largely of original researches, the results of which are here published for the first time.

The author has ransacked the four quarters of the globe for the material on which to conduct his investigations, in order that his results might be as representative as possible. The oak barks were mostly from the United States, although one came from Herefordshire, England, and another from Dehra Dún, in the Himalayas of India; the mangrove was obtained from Jamaica; and the canaigre from the desert regions of Arizona. A description of each is given; the history is briefly outlined; and this is followed by the method of preparation, properties, and composition of the tannin obtained. The conclusions reached are, that while there exist as many tannins as there are species of plants yielding them, the whole number may possibly be classified into two groups,—those which are identical with the tannin from nutgalls, and those which are identical with that from oak bark.

It was said of the first volume that it had no counterpart in the English language, and the same remark applies in a greater degree to this volume. It is rare to find in any language the results of botanical and chemical investigations moulded into an attractive form for the general reader, and yet in these volumes the author has succeeded in illuminating the technical parts so as to make them easily understood by almost every one. The book appeals to the chemist and botanist, as well as to those interested in the industrial arts of tanning and dyeing. It is difficult to realize that a substance which is usually known only by its comparatively moderate use in medicine should be so far-reaching in its application; but, while it is not employed in a pure state, in an impure condition as vegetable extract it is used by the thousands of tons annually to convert our hides into leather and to assist in dyeing our fabrics.

An Initial Experience, and Other Stories. Edited by Captain Charles King.

Everything that Captain King places his seal upon has the right ring. As author he is first in his own field. As editor of the tales of others he has introduced some admirable work, which his selective faculty insures to the reader to be interesting in plot and able in workmanship.

The last collection so issued is called *An Initial Experience*, from the title-story by Captain King. It is wholly needless to say that this, the newest product of the brilliant Captain's pen, is romantic, picturesque, and dashing, with a strong tang of the "wild and woolly West" in its exhilarating atmosphere. Captain King also introduces us to R. Monckton-Dene, U.S.A., who sustains his repute as the "American Kipling;" while the rest of the tales are quite in keeping with those of these two military authors. Indeed, most of the authors are officers of the army, and this gives a peculiar flavor of adventure to the tales. To say that they make a brilliant book is a supererogation when Captain King's own stunning story strikes the key-note of the collection. The attractive volume is from the press of the Captain's regular publishers, J. B. Lippincott Company.

Some Celebrated Hostelrys.

"THE STRATFORD," Philadelphia.

I have used the Royal Baking Powder for the last ten years and found it superior to any other.

Carl Müller
Head Pastry Cook.

COLONNADE HOTEL, Philadelphia.

I cannot recommend the Royal Baking Powder too highly. I have tried almost all, and I find Royal the best. The majority of the chefs agree with me.

Alfred Bordes
Chef.

"THE STENTON," Philadelphia.

An experience of many years in the best hotels and private houses, with many brands of baking powders, shows the Royal Baking Powder superior.

E. Stenton
Chef.

CONTINENTAL HOTEL, Philadelphia.

We are large users of Royal Baking Powder, and it has proven very satisfactory.

Charles Speicher

ROYAL BAKING POWDER CO., 108 WALL ST., NEW YORK.

HANCOCK'S GOATEE.—When Garfield and Hancock were opposing candidates for the Presidency, I photographed them both within a few days of each other. They were truly great men. I placed my hand over the lower portion of General Hancock's face and said to him, "You have a fine head, fine nose, fine eyes, and fine mouth, but your chin is weak." He looked at me curiously for a moment, and answered, simply, "You are right."

"You need a goatee," I continued.

"I wore one during the war," he replied, with a little show of pride, as he straightened up his magnificent shoulders. My suggestion that a goatee be painted into the photograph was accepted, and therefore a tuft of hair covered the general's chin in all of his campaign pictures.—**NAPOLÉON SARONY**, in *New York Herald*.

A RUDE ENGLISHMAN.—An English historian visiting America was tendered a reception by a literary club in New York, and formally received in a speech of welcome by a venerable clergyman. Finding the speech too long, the guest yawned in the bishop's face, turned his back on him, and walked to a window. There was a quick interchange of amazed glances, then the men fell into groups, and the underbred visitor was left to the care of one man for the rest of the evening. The rebuke was silent, but keen and keenly felt.—*Youth's Companion*.

IBSEN.—On Bredgade, in front of Santa Anna Place, the writer saw, in a photographer's show-case, Ibsen's likeness for the first time. By a strange coincidence, the man himself appeared on the street, dressed exactly as he was in the picture. He wore side-whiskers, and his hair was jet-black and carefully oiled. He wore a silk hat of the latest fashion, a black velvet coat, a pair of tight-fitting fawn-colored trousers strapped under patent-leather shoes, while his hands were encased in elegant gloves. The atmosphere about him was filled with an aroma of scented hair-oil, and in his dress he looked the exquisite, his face bearing no traces of an emotional nature. One would have taken him for a prosperous merchant rather than one of the world's greatest poets and philosophers.

We met several times after this at Jerichau's house. He was always measured, exact, punctual. We used to say about him at the Academy that he never even put on a glove without first considering the effect of the various motions necessary to accomplish the act.—*Californian*.

A TREAT FOR TOPERS.—A recent number gives an interesting analysis of beer nearly a century old. The beverage in question was brewed and bottled by the well-known firm of Worthington & Company, of Burton-on-Trent, in 1798. Several bottles of it were lately discovered by accident, and, together with some bottles of ale not over eighteen months old, were subjected to an analysis by prominent chemists. The difference in the two liquids was very slight: their specific gravity showed little variation, save that the alcoholic properties of the older beer were slightly higher. Under the microscope the sediment showed shrivelled yeast-cells, whose vitality at some period was plainly proved; also a pretty strong development of carbonic gas. What specially distinguished the old beer was its remarkable bouquet, which resembled that of old madeira, while it had lost its peculiar beery character through having been kept bottled for so long a time.—*Brauer Zeitung*.



EMILE ZOLA.

..... la liqueur de vie, qui allait combattre la débilité humaine, seule cause réelle de tous les maux, une véritable et scientifique fontaine de jeunesse, qui, en donnant de la force, de la santé et de la volonté, referait une humanité toute neuve.

a M. A. Mariani.

Emile Zola

"..... The Elixir of Life, which will combat human debility—it is a veritable scientific fountain of youth, which gives vigor, health and energy, thus creating a new and superior race."

EMILE ZOLA.

FOR BODY AND BRAIN

MOST POPULARLY
USED TONIC-STIMU-
LANT IN HOSPITALS,
PUBLIC AND RELIG-
IOUS INSTITUTIONS
EVERYWHERE.

VIN MARIANI

NOURISHES - FORTIFIES - REFRESHES
STRENGTHENS THE ENTIRE SYSTEM

OVER 7,000
WRITTEN ENDORSE-
MENTS FROM PROM-
INENT PHYSICIANS
IN EUROPE AND
AMERICA.

The most Agreeable, Effective and Lasting Tonic.

Ask for Vin Mariani at
Druggists and Fancy
Grocers.

EVERY TEST, STRICTLY ON ITS OWN MERITS,
PROVES ITS EXCEPTIONAL REPUTATION.

To avoid disappoint-
ments accept no sub-
stitutions.

Free Offer.

We will mail, gratis, 75 Portraits, Sketches, Biographical
Notes and Autographs of Celebrities, testifying to excellence
of "VIN MARIANI."

PARIS: 41 BOULEVARD HAUBERT.
LONDON: 230 OXFORD STREET.

MARIANI & CO., 52 W. 15th St., New York.

SIAMESE COINS.—The first silver coins of Siam were made in 1862, and bore the design of an elephant on one side and of royal umbrellas on the other. The present coins have a portrait of the king on one side. In former times shells were used as money.—*Philadelphia Press*.

FANNY KEMBLE AND THE SHOPMAN.—I once went out shopping with her one spring morning when she thought her room would look the brighter for muslin curtains to admit the light. She carried a long purse full of sovereigns in her hand. We drove to Regent Street to a shop where she told me her mother and her aunt used both to go. It may have been over that very counter that the classic "Will it wash?" was uttered.

The shopman, who had assuredly not served Mrs. Siddons, or he would have learned his lesson earlier in life, produced silken hangings and worsted and fabrics of various hues and textures, to Mrs. Kemble's great annoyance. I had gone to another counter, and came back to find her surrounded by draperies, sitting on her chair and looking very serious: distant thunder seemed in the air. "Young man," she said to the shopman, "perhaps your time is of no value to you; to me my time is of great value. I shall thank you to show me the things I asked for, instead of all these things for which I did not ask." And she flashed such a glance at him as must have surprised the youth. He looked perfectly scared, seemed to leap over the counter, and the muslin curtains appeared on the spot.—**MRS. RITCHIE**, in *Macmillan's Magazine*.

HOSPITAL PRACTICE.—Senior Surgeon.—"How's that affection of the heart going on?"

Junior Surgeon (forgetting himself).—"It's all settled, doctor: she accepted me this morning."

KANT'S RELAXATIONS.—The only relaxation Kant, the celebrated German philosopher, allowed himself was a walk, which he invariably took during his life at Königsberg at about the same hour every afternoon. His usual stroll was along the banks of the Pregel toward the Friedrich's Fort, and in these walks he was always a careful observer of the phenomena of nature. He told his friends one day how, as he passed a certain building in his daily walk, he had noticed several young swallows lying dead upon the ground. On looking up he discovered, as he fancied, that the old birds were actually throwing their young ones out of the nests. It was a season remarkable for the scarcity of insects, and the birds were apparently sacrificing some of their progeny to save the rest. "At this," added Kant, "my intellect was hushed: the only thing to do here was to fall down and worship."

Another great philosopher, Bishop Butler, used to take his recreation, according to one of his chaplains, in a somewhat singular manner. He would walk for hours in the little garden behind his palace at Bristol "in the darkest night which the time of the year could afford."—*Chambers's Journal*.

THE ODDEST COLLECTOR OF ALL.—Philadelphia possesses a collector of horseshoes, Boston a gatherer of bricks, New Orleans a collector of sugar samples, Louisville a gatherer of sample flasks of whiskey, but Nebraska beats them all. She boasts of a man who takes locks of hair shaved from the heads of noted criminals, which he labels and indexes with great care.—*Kate Field's Washington*.

WEBER TONE

Weber Piano

The
WONDERFUL WEBER
TONE
Is Found ONLY in the
Weber
Pianos
Warerooms
5th AVE. & 16th ST.
C. H. CO.

ALL MUSICAL ARTISTS ENDORSE THE WEBER PIANO.

BOOKS DO NOT MAKE MEN.—Masses of accurate knowledge existed in the world before books began,—witness the older triumphs of architecture and hydraulics,—and much of it was handed on from generation to generation, as the secrets of farming and cattle-breeding are now, without any writing at all. Even knowledge, therefore, does not belong only to the men of books, who, in all departments, rather preserve than create it, while efficiency seems almost to belong to those who study little.

There are exceptions, of course, like Mr. Gladstone, who reads everything; but sway over mankind has not belonged principally to readers, and has not infrequently belonged to men who despised books, finding in themselves and their experience, or, in a few cases, in their own genius, better guides.—*London Spectator*.

GOOD RETURNS FOR CAPITAL INVESTED.—Mr. W. W. Oules, R.A., tells a capital story of the time when he was painting John Bright's portrait.

One day Mr. Bright said to him when sitting, "Now, what does it cost to set an artist up in business? I suppose a ten- or twenty-pound note would do it?"

Mr. Oules replied, "Oh, yes."

"Well," said Mr. Bright, "I think you ought to consider yourself a very lucky young fellow to earn five or six thousand pounds a year on a twenty-pound plant."—*London Tit-Bits*.

THE MOTION WAS DENIED.—They tell a good story about a judge who is well known in Buffalo. Some time ago a man who is a "shyster" lawyer came before him to make a motion. This man lived in one of the suburban towns, and he was not particularly scrupulous as regarded his personal appearance. He waited until he had an opportunity to address the judge, and then made his motion. It was merely a perfunctory sort of motion, to open up a case or something of the kind, and not one in a thousand is refused by any judge. Everybody in the court-room was therefore greatly surprised when the judge thundered out, "Denied!"

The man himself was completely taken aback. He rose to his feet and stammered and stuttered, and finally said,—

"But, your honor, I think you must be laboring under a misapprehension. This is of no importance. There isn't a soul on earth who isn't willing that the motion should be granted."

"It's denied, I tell you," said the judge again.

"Will your honor kindly state the grounds on which the denial is made?"

The judge straightened up in his chair, took off his eyeglasses, and looked severely at the lawyer. He extended his hand and pointed one of his long fingers at him. "The motion is denied for two reasons," he said, impressively. "First, you are not a regular member of the bar and not entitled to practise in a court of record; second, you need a bath."—*Buffalo Express*.

WHERE CANARY-BIRDS ARE RAISED AND SOLD.—The peasants of Germany raise, in round numbers, two hundred and fifty thousand canary-birds. Of these one hundred thousand are shipped to the United States. The next greatest demand for the birds comes from England, which takes fifty thousand birds annually. The finer birds are usually sold in Germany, where higher prices can be obtained for the best birds than anywhere else.



A CAPUCHIN'S LEGS.—Sometimes a rare felicity has been shown in the selection of a text. Thus, a Capuchin about to preach in a church at Lyons slipped on the pulpit steps, falling so ungracefully that a pair of brawny legs presented themselves through the balusters to the gaze of the startled congregation. Quickly recovering himself, the self-possessed monk took his place in the pulpit and gave out words appropriately chosen from the Gospel for the day: "Tell the vision unto no man."—*Temple Bar*.

JOWETT AND THE PRINCE.—It was Jowett's resistless energy that made him, as an undergraduate, work thirteen hours a day, as he once told a Siamese prince in my hearing. The said Siamese prince had, as the porter pompously expressed it, "come into Balliol by the master's front door, sir," had entered for his "smalls," had telegraphed, so it was popularly understood, to his father that he was in for this his first examination, and had paid for a reply telegram, which, it is asserted, ran as follows: "It is well. Fourteen youths of the nobler sort have been sacrificed." But the propitiatory offering in Siam had failed to help in the battle of the schools. The prince had been ploughed, and was sent for by the master.

"I am much ashamed of you," said Jowett, in his sternest and jerkiest manner. "You are very idle, very idle. You are no credit to your country or to this college. How many hours a day do you work?"

To which the Siamese answered smilingly, "Aw, master, I do work very hard. Sometimes three hours."

To whom replied the master, "You ought to work at least eight hours. When I was your age, I worked thirteen."

It is true that one was convulsed at the time by hearing the prince say, with a grin from ear to ear, but in all good faith, "Aw, but, master, you have such a very big head!" But that "I used to work thirteen hours a day" sank deep into one's mind.—*Cornhill Magazine*.

THE NUTMEG.—If a nutmeg is grated at the stalk end it will prove hollow throughout, whereas the same nutmeg grated from the other end would prove sound throughout.—*Christian Inquirer*.

A CURIOUS PHENOMENON.—I was on the top of a small mountain in the Dovretjeld, near Hierkin, in the late afternoon of an August day, the sun being from ten to fifteen degrees above the horizon, when I saw a remarkable phenomenon. On the opposite side to the sun was a bright disk, perhaps five degrees in diameter, shown on some drifting clouds. The shadow of my head appeared in the centre of the disk, that of my body below, while outside the disk the shadow of my legs was faintly visible. The phenomenon continued on and off—that is to say, when the clouds were favorable—for nearly a quarter of an hour. The landlord of the hotel said he had never seen anything of the sort.—*Nature*.

A SENSITIVE CHILD.—A little Buffalo girl visiting in the country was stung by a bee. She didn't seem to mind the pain so very much, but, as her disposition was sensitive, she ran sobbing to her mother with the statement, "I don't see what he did it for, 'cause I hadn't done a thing to him."—*Buffalo Courier*.

This food product represents an advance step of civilization—the beginning of a pure food era. It fully supplies the want that lard only half supplied. It is at once, more healthful, more delicate, more economical than lard for shortening, frying and for every cooking use. The shortcomings and unhealthfulness of lard created the demand for

Cottolene

The great success of **Cottolene** has called out many imitations. They resemble **Cottolene** as gilt does gold—in appearance only. The quality, delicacy and merits of **Cottolene** are inimitable. The next time you have occasion to buy lard, buy **Cottolene** instead. You will be amply repaid for the experiment. Sold in 3 and 5 lb. pails.

Made only by

The N. K. Fairbank Company,

Chicago, St. Louis, New York, Boston, Philadelphia,
Montreal, San Francisco, etc.



EXPLAINED.—Briggs.—“I saw a district messenger boy in a horse-car get up and give his seat to a lady the other day.”

Griggs.—“What suggested the idea to him?”

Briggs.—“He wanted to get out.”—*Texas Siftings*.

THE DEMAND WAS GRANTED.—A certain city in England sent a deputation to Charles II., who was very ill, soliciting some favor. The orator, without any mercy to the sick man, made a long, tedious discourse. “Have you anything more to say?” asked the merry monarch, impatiently. “Nothing,” replied the orator, “except that if you do not grant our request I am instructed to recite my speech over again.” Charles ordered that all his demands should be freely and instantaneously complied with.—*New York Ledger*.

CORONETS.—English noblemen are the only ones in Europe who ever wear coronets on their heads, and the sole occasion when they do so is at the coronation of the sovereign. They hold them in their hands through the ceremony, and at the moment when the Archbishop of Canterbury places the crown upon the monarch's head every peer and peeress present dons his or her coronet. Inasmuch as nearly half of the House of Lords is composed of peers created by Queen Victoria, it is probable that none of them has taken the trouble to provide himself with the silver coronets lined with crimson velvet of their rank, and were the queen to die and the Prince of Wales to ascend the throne there would doubtless be a run on the court silversmiths for baubles of this character. The baron's coronet worn by the poet Lord Byron at the coronation of George IV., and which was manufactured for the occasion, is now in this country, and is said to have been converted into a chafing-dish for the humble vegetable known as the potato, the velvet cap having been removed from the inside and turned upside down, so that the four silver balls constitute the support of the chafing-dish.—*Vogue*.

“THIS head-work is extremely tiresome, you know,” said Adolphus.

“What great problem have you been trying to solve now?”

“Keeping my hat on when the wind blows.”—*Washington Star*.

WAR AND EDUCATION.—There is no better proof of the essential barbarism of even the most civilized nations of the world than is afforded by a comparison of the money they expend for the maintenance of physical supremacy as against the expenditure for mental improvement. Though it be assumed that brain is better than brawn, there is no evidence that statesmen so regard it. In some tables recently compiled the amounts per capita expended by various governments for military and for educational purposes are set down as follows:

	Military.	Education.
France	\$4.00	\$0.70
England	3.72	62
Holland	3.58	64
Saxony	2.38	38
Württemberg	2.38	38
Bavaria	2.38	40
Prussia	2.04	50
Russia	2.04	3
Denmark	1.76	94
Italy	1.52	36
Belgium	1.38	46
Austria	1.36	32
Switzerland	82	84
United States	30	1.35

Philadelphia Record.

BABIES

ought to be fat and show their dimples when they laugh. Thin babies are rarely interesting simply because they don't look well.

Scott's Emulsion

the Cream of Cod-liver Oil and Hypophosphites of Lime and Soda, is a natural, palatable, easy food for babies and all growing children. It gives them materials for growth. *Physicians, the world over, endorse it.*

Weak Mothers

respond readily to the nourishment of Scott's Emulsion. It gives them strength and quickly restores health.

Why should you go contrary to your physician's advice by allowing some inferior preparation to be substituted for SCOTT'S EMULSION?

Prepared by SCOTT & BOWNE Chemists, New-York City. Druggists sell it.

GRIM HUMOR OF A SUICIDE.—A peddler and hermit of Orono, Maine, blew the top of his head off. He left the following letter:

"TO THE CURIOUS.—3.15 P.M., February 17.—In two hours I shall be dead, shot through the head with a big charge of lead (no poetry intended), and be on the spook route to kingdom come. Disease and poverty the cause. However, no one knows I am in a destitute condition, but I'm in it just the same. Burn, boil, bake, bury, or send my carcass to the phosphate factory, just as the humor strikes you. I'm weak, faint, and hungry, but I know how to cancel all my engagements with Mr. Trouble and Mr. Misery."

A DUBIOUS RECOMMENDATION.—A dealer, recommending a new spring bed, assures his customer that if he once sleeps on it he will never sleep on anything else.—*Newport Daily News*.

THE HOTTEST DESERT IN THE WORLD.—It is not generally known that the hottest, most arid desert in the world is in the United States, but such is the fact. The Cocapah desert is small, but it is the most dangerous of any in the known world. Standing upon the mountain-range to the east, looking across the sixty miles of plain to another mountain-range on the west, with glimpses of two small lakes midway between, it does not appear that it requires any extraordinary feat of danger or endurance to cross the plain. And this has caused the loss of many lives. The sand of that desert is so hot that in a few miles the shoes will be literally burned off the traveller's feet, beasts will be overcome before half the distance is encompassed, and the adventurous traveller dies in agony, literally consumed with heat from without and thirst within. Many have been known to attempt the journey, and but few have been known to return. These have gone no farther than the first lake, and, finding it salt water, have beaten a retreat. The nearest lake has been reached often enough to know that it ebbs and flows with the Gulf of California, and the water is the same: hence it must be a part of that body, although separated from it by sixty or seventy miles of solid earth and a high range of mountains. This range was probably at one time an island, and the Cocapah desert the bottom of the sea. I once started across the barren waste to investigate, but I had not gone ten miles before becoming completely exhausted. The soles of my feet were blistered with heat, my brain grew dizzy, I could get no air, and the breath seemed to stop in my throat. I turned back just in time to save my life, and when I reached the forests of the mountain once more I was delirious for hours."—*St. Louis Globe-Democrat*.

PROVED IT.—"My wife will bear witness," said the prisoner at the bar, "that at the very time I am accused of burglarizing Mr. Smith's premises I was engaged in walking the floor with my infant child in my arms, endeavoring to soothe it by singing 'Rock-a-by Baby.'" "The prisoner is discharged," remarked his honor. "He can prove a lullaby."—*Ram's Horn*.

THE END OF A CARELESS FISHERMAN.—George Wiley, of Jones County, Mississippi, went fishing. Friends after a while found him hanging by one leg to a tree over Pearl River and very dead indeed. It was found that he had run his fish-line over a limb and tied it to his leg for security. A hundred-and-fifty-pound catfish seized the hook and promptly pulled Mr. Wiley up, holding him there until dead.—*New York Recorder*.

BEECHAM'S PILLS

(Vegetable)

What They Are For

Biliousness	dull headache	depression of spirits
indigestion (dyspepsia)	neuralgia	great mental depression
sickness at the stomach	fulness of the stomach	general debility
(nausea)	(distention)	backache
heartburn	shortness of breath	pain in the side
loss of appetite (anorexia)	(dyspnoea)	heaviness
coated tongue	dizziness (vertigo)	disturbed sleep
bad taste in the mouth	wind on the stomach	nightmare
torpid liver	pain or oppression	hot and throbbing head
pimples	around the heart	coldness of hands and
sick headache (megrim	fluttering of the heart	feet
or hemicrania)	(palpitation)	hot skin
nervous headache	irritability	sallow skin
	nervousness	

when these conditions are caused by constipation; and constipation is the most frequent cause of most of them.

One of the most important things for everybody to learn is that constipation causes more than half the sickness in the world, especially in women; and it can all be prevented. They who call the cure for constipation a cure-all are only half wrong after all.

Write to B. F. Allen Company, 365 Canal Street, New York, for a little book on CONSTIPATION (its causes, consequences, and correction); sent free. If you are not within reach of a druggist, the pills will be sent by mail, 25 cents a box.

GENUINE GUYOTS.—A few days ago the students at Harvard College extended a royal welcome to Henry Irving, the great English actor, on the occasion of his visit to Cambridge. Mr. Irving delivered a lecture to the young men, and chose as his subject "Individuality." In the course of his remarks Mr. Irving pungently said, "No man has ever made a perfect success in life without having been easily caricatured."

No inventor has ever made a great hit with his inventions without having scores of imitators. A story is told of the great Charles Guyot, of Paris, which amply proves the truth of Mr. Irving's assertion. A certain manufacturer of suspenders, fancying he could produce equally good trouser appendages as the Guyots, induced one of the large outfitters to decorate a window with his product of imitations. Charles Guyot, on being told of this, merely said, "For the purely monkey arts of life there can be no future; they merely stand in the crude glare of the present, and there can be no lasting place for them in memory. What is natural to the creator is unnatural and lifeless in the imitator."

Individuality is a priceless gift, while imitation is a fraud and deception. No imitator can be truthful, and success can never be achieved on a false basis. Never were truer words spoken; and, while the imitations of the greatest boon to masculinity (the genuine Guyot suspenders) are constantly appearing, yet the sale of the genuine Guyots has been steadily increased for the past fifty years, and millions of American gentlemen will wear nothing but the genuine Guyots, because they are the only perfect suspenders in every particular.

THE ignorance of English swells concerning English literary lights is a source of never-ending amazement to visiting Americans. It is not unusual to hear it asserted that the Brownings were Americans. "Of course they were, my dear," declared a duchess to an American girl: "they always lived in Italy."
—*Boston Transcript*.

ABSENCE OF MIND.—The celebrated Lessing was remarkable for frequent absence of mind. Having missed money at different times without being able to discover who took it, he determined to put the honesty of his servant to the test, and left a handful of gold on the table.

"Of course you counted it?" said one of his friends.

"Counted it?" said Lessing, somewhat embarrassed. "No: I forgot that."

At a public sale there was a book which Lessing was very desirous of possessing. He gave three of his friends at different times a commission to buy it at any price. They accordingly bid against each other till they had got as far as ninety crowns. Happily one of them thought it best to speak to the others, when it appeared they had all been bidding for Lessing, whose forgetfulness on this occasion cost him eighty crowns.—*Sala's Journal*.

G. F. WATTS, the English artist, is so prolific in paintings that it is difficult to think of him as a veteran of seventy-two years. Few of the younger generation of painters either here or abroad are so industrious, and, as Mr. Watts has been at work with the brush since he was twenty-five, the list of his paintings makes a voluminous catalogue. He rises at four o'clock in the morning, and usually remains at the easel through the day until the light is gone. At nine o'clock he is in bed.—*New York World*.

Receipts for May.

Plain Strawberry Shortcake.—Make a crust with one-half more shortening than for biscuit (*see next receipt*). Roll in two sheets. Spread the under one with butter, place the other on top and bake. When baked, separate layers and place mashed and sweetened fruit between and on top. Or the crust can be baked in one piece and split and buttered after baking. Peach, orange, apple and rhubarb shortcakes are very nice. Serve with cream.


Biscuit.—Sift with one quart flour two teaspoonfuls Cleveland's Superior Baking Powder and one-half teaspoonful salt. Rub in shortening (butter and lard mixed) the size of an egg, and wet with enough sweet milk to make soft dough. Handle as little as possible and roll out about one inch thick. Cut the desired size, and bake twenty minutes. Do not have the oven *too hot* at first—*increase the heat*.

A rounded
teaspoonful of



Cleveland's Baking Powder

does more and better work
than a heaping



teaspoonful of others.

*Cleveland's Baking Powder,
"Pure" and "Sure."*

Baking Powder Omelet.—Beat up smooth the yolks of four eggs in a dish. Then beat up into a froth *with a fork* the whites of the four eggs in another dish and sprinkle on the same one-half teaspoonful of Cleveland's Baking Powder. Mix the whites and yolks and pour into a hot pan and cook the same as for any other omelet. The success of the omelet is in the beating with a fork, and after the omelet is cooked, in getting it onto the plate in its foamy deliciousness.

Sally Lunn.—One pint flour, two teaspoonfuls Cleveland's Superior Baking Powder, one-half teaspoonful salt. Beat two eggs, whites and yolks separately, add to yolks one-half cup sweet milk or water. Stir slowly into flour, and add one-half cup melted butter. Stir in whites last. Bake in muffin pans two-thirds full.

Fig Cake.—One and one-half cups sugar, one-half cup butter, one-half cup sweet milk, one and one-half cups flour, one teaspoonful Cleveland's Superior Baking Powder, one-half cup cornstarch, whites of six eggs. Bake in two layers, and fill with fig filling. Chop one pound figs, add one half cup sugar and one cup water. Stew until soft and smooth. Spread between the layers, and ice the whole cake with boiled icing.

Our Cook Book Contains

400 Receipts

Covering the whole subject, from soup to dessert,

Free

Send stamp and address

Cleveland Baking Powder Co.,
87 Fulton St. New York.

A TENDER-HEARTED GIRL.—The *Gazette* of Emporia, Kansas, says there is a young lady in that town who cries herself to sleep every night of her life in the terrible fear that her beauty has broken some poor man's heart during the day.

A ROLAND FOR HIS OLIVER —Mrs. Lakeside.—“ You are Mr. Porkchop's second wife, are you not?”

Mrs. Porkchop.—“ Yes; he was married once before.”

“ That's unpleasant. Whenever you have a little row he can bring up his first wife and brag about her goodness.”

“ He never tried it but once, and then I told him what nice men my three other husbands were.”—*Texas Siftings*.

THE OLD BOOKS.

Deep in the past I peer, and see
A child upon the nursery floor,
Holding a book upon his knee,
Who asks, like Oliver, for more.
The number of his years is four,
And yet in letters hath he skill.
How deep he dives in fairy lore!
The books I loved, I love them still.

One gift the fairies gave me,—three
They commonly bestowed of yore,—
The love of books, the golden key
That opens the enchanted door.
Behind it Bluebeard lurks, and o'er
And o'er doth Jack his giants kill,
And there is all Aladdin's store.
The books I loved, I love them still.

Take all, but leave my books to me!
Those heavy creels of old we loved
We fill not now, nor wander free,
Nor wear the heart that once we wore.
Not now each giver seems to pour
His waters from the muse's hill,
Though sometimes gone from stream to shore.
The books I loved, I love them still.

ANDREW LANG.

CORAL-FISHING IN SARDINIA.—Coral-fishing is gradually decaying in the island of Sardinia. This fact is attributed by some to the exhaustion of the old coral-reefs, while others say that it is due to the competition in the market by the selling of coral of inferior quality fished in enormous quantities on the coast of Sicily and sold at an extremely low price.—*St. Louis Republic*.

FICKLENESS.—She.—“ Her heart is like a novel,—easy to read.”

He.—“ Yes; and like a novel in a circulating library,—not to be kept longer than two weeks.”—*Judge*.

Send 5 outside wrappers of either California Fruit or California Pepin Chewing Gum with two 2-cent stamps, and we will send you Treasure Island, by Robert Louis Stevenson, or any other of our 1700 fine books. Send for list. J. F. PRIMLEY, CHICAGO.



Primley's
California Fruit
Chewing
Gum

A
DELICIOUS
CONFECTION

Makes the Breath Sweet, Cleans the Teeth,
Aids Digestion. No Heartburn or
Dyspepsia where it is used.

DON'T TAKE A SUBSTITUTE, INSIST ON

Primley's



FOND MOTHER (listening to baby's cries).—"What a sweet-toned voice she has, dear! She'll be a splendid singer. We must send her to Italy and have her voice cultivated."

Brutal Father (trying to sleep).—"Send her now."—*Tit-Bits*.

MACAULAY'S MIND.—Lord Macaulay on one occasion repeated to himself the whole of "Paradise Lost" while crossing the Irish Channel.

At another time, while waiting in a Cambridge coffee-house for a post-chaise, he picked up a country newspaper containing two poetical pieces,—one the "Reflections of an Exile" and the other "A Parody on a Welsh Ballad,"—looked them once through, never gave them a further thought for forty years, and then repeated them without the change of a single word.

Macaulay's mind, some one has said, was like a dredging-net, which took up all that it encountered, both good and bad, nor ever seemed to feel the burden. Very much unlike a dredge-net, and more like a strainer, are the minds of some other persons, who carefully select what they will retain or who have a natural facility for remembering special classes of facts,—George Bidder for figures, Sir Walter Scott for verses, and Mezzofanti for languages.

Sir Walter Scott, quoting the old Borderer who had no command of his memory and only retained what hit his fancy, says that his own memory was of precisely the same kind. It seldom failed to preserve most tenaciously a favorite passage of poetry, a play-house ditty, or, above all, a border raid ballad, "but names, dates, and other technicalities of history escaped me," he says, "in a most melancholy degree."—*Interior*.

WHAT SHE FORGOT.—Visitor.—"So you have a little baby brother?"

Little Girl.—"Yes'm. I prayed for a little baby sister, but I s'pose the angels had run out of girl babies. I forgot to tell them there wasn't any hurry."—*Good News*.

BAYONET AND SWORD.—The sabre used by the United States cavalry is copied from the scimitar of the Saracens, which was the most effective sword for cutting purposes ever devised. It will be remembered how, according to the story told in Sir Walter Scott's "Talisman," with such a weapon the pagan Saladin chopped a soft cushion in two at one blow, to the amazement of Richard Cœur-de-Lion. With a straight sword one can make a hack or thrust, but to slice an adversary one must saw with it. The scimitar, being curved and wide and heavy towards the end, slices by the mere fact of striking. The kind of bayonet chiefly used by the Federal troops during the war of the rebellion was the old triangular pattern. Sword-bayonets were also employed on guns imported from Europe. During the last ten years the regulation bayonet has been of the "ramrod" type,—a hideous instrument, cylindrical and of the thickness of a ramrod, with a sharp screw point like that of a carpenter's bit. It is now to be replaced with the knife-bayonet, which somewhat resembles a butcher's knife, and is twelve inches long, with one edge. It is quite as effective as and much lighter than the sword-bayonet. The latter is being dispensed with by most of the European nations in favor of the knife-bayonet. The bayonet was a French invention. In the early days of fire-arms soldiers used to carry both guns and pikes, but the notion of attaching the pike to the gun in such a manner that both could be used at the same time was the beginning of the idea of the bayonet.—*Troy Times*.

Mellin's Food

received the highest awards, Medal and Diploma, that were given to Infants' Foods by the World's Fair, *but* the voluntary selection and *successful* use of MELLIN'S FOOD at the Crèche, in the Children's building at the World's Fair (10,000 Babies were fed with it there), by the Matron, Miss Marjory Hall, "after a fair trial of the other Foods," was, *really*, the highest award, as no other Infants' Food in the world was thus honored and endorsed.

OUR BOOK FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF MOTHERS SENT FREE ON APPLICATION.

DOLIBER-GOODALE CO., BOSTON, MASS.

AN ODD FACT.—One of the strange things in life is the fact that there are actors getting three hundred dollars a week for doing foolish things on the stage which are constantly being done by people in private life for nothing.—*Brooklyn Eagle*.

A MODEL ADVERTISEMENT.—M. Bidel's menagerie has lately been enriched by a couple of magnificent Bengal tigers. A brief account of the capture of these denizens of the jungle may interest our readers.

A party of Indian hunters, on being taken by one of the native guides to a well-known haunt of these beasts of prey, proceeded to collect a mass of withered leaves, which they spread over a considerable surface of the ground and afterward sprinkled pretty freely with liquid cement. They then climbed into a tree to await the result.

Presently half a dozen tigers issued forth into the space, where they found their progress impeded by the slimy leaves, which stuck to their paws, while their attempts to free themselves only made matters worse, as the leaves adhered to their mouths and eyes, when in their despair they rolled about on the ground until they presented to the eyes of the spectators a living mass of decayed vegetation.

Our sportsmen now descended from their hiding-place and secured their prey, which was comparatively easy work. After stripping the tigers of a portion of their superincumbent loads, they attached the forepaw of each to the tail of its predecessor by applying a little of the cement, then marched them in Indian file to the nearest port on the Ganges, whence they were conveyed to Europe.

The above cement is unrivalled for repairing broken glass, china, ivory, etc. It is manufactured by —, and can be had of all reputable chemists.—*London Million*.

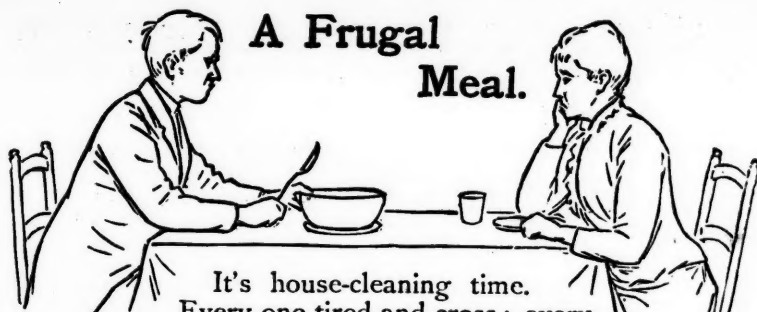
NOT ACCORDING TO SHAKESPEARE.—The question sometimes arises whether an actor can successfully depict one emotion while feeling another. I once saw poor John McCullough give a striking exhibition of his ability to do this. He was playing King Lear, and I occupied a seat very near the foot-lights. It afforded me exceptional opportunities to observe the play of his features and catch everything that he said.

He was rendering one of the most pathetic passages in the play, and tears—real tears—were trickling down his cheeks. The orchestra was endeavoring to enhance the pathos of the scene by playing slow music, soft and low. But McCullough's acting did not need any artificial aid. It annoyed him exceedingly. During a pause in his soliloquy, without so much as a shadow of a change taking place in the expression of heart-rending sorrow and misery stamped on his face, he said, and it seemed to me that he didn't move his lips to say it,—

"Stop that d—d fiddling!"

His voice couldn't be heard except by a few who were immediately in front of him. The leader of the orchestra heard it, and a look of pained surprise came into his face, but he stopped the "fiddling" at once.

The great mass of those who filled the theatre and soon broke forth into thunders of applause had not the faintest suspicion that while McCullough had touched their hearts to the quick by his superb portrayal of the old king's grief and misery he had really been madder than a hornet.—*New York Herald*.



It's house-cleaning time.
Every one tired and cross; every thing out of place and wrong end foremost. No time to fool away in cooking; no fire, probably; no appetite, perhaps; no comfort, certainly.

No Pearline—that's the cause of it. A little **Pearline**, when you're cleaning house, makes the whole thing smooth and easy. With anything about the house that isn't hurt by water, you can save time and hard work by using **Pearline**. You won't have to use that rub, rub, rub, in getting the dirt off; that saves other things—your paint, for instance.

Beware Peddlers and some unscrupulous grocers will tell you, "this is as good as" or "the same as Pearline." IT'S FALSE—Pearline is never peddled; if your grocer sends you an imitation, be honest—send it back. 318 JAMES PYLE, New York.

TEN REASONS FOR USING DOBBINS ELECTRIC SOAP.

- THE REASON WHY** it is **best** from a sanitary point of view, is because of its absolute purity.
- " " " it is unscented, is because nothing is used in its manufacture that must be hidden or disguised.
- " " " it is cheapest to use, is because it is harder and dryer than ordinary soap, and does not waste away; also because it is not filled with rosin and clay as make-weights.
- " " " no boiling of clothes is needed, is because there is no adulteration in it—being absolutely pure, it can do its own work.
- " " " it leaves clothes washed with it whiter and sweeter than any other soap, is because it contains no adulteration to yellow them.
- " " " it washes flannels without shrinking, bringing them out soft, white, and fleecy, is because it is free from rosin, which hardens, yellows, and mats together all woollen fibres, making them harsh and coarse.
- " " " three bars of it will make a gallon of elegant white soft-soap if simply shaved up and thoroughly dissolved by boiling in a gallon of water, is that it contains pure and costly ingredients found in no other soap.
- " " " it won't injure the finest lace or the most delicate fabric, is that all these ingredients are harmless.
- " " " we paid \$50,000 for the formula twenty-five years ago, is that we knew there was no other soap like it.
- " " " so many millions of women use it, is that they have found it to be the best and most economical, and absolutely unchanging in quality,

**ASK YOUR GROCER FOR IT. DOBBINS SOAP MFG. CO.
PHILADELPHIA, PA.**

LOGIC.—“From what I’ve been reading, I suppose boarding-houses must have been found first in Turkey.”

“Will you explain why?”

“The best variety of prunes grow there.”—*Chicago Inter-Ocean*.

DEEP-SEA-COOLED CHAMPAGNE.—“Speaking of chilling champagnes,” said the captain of the United States survey steamer Albatross, “I had an experience at sea one Christmas which was not only peculiar, but surprising. We had been on a long cruise, and were down near the tropics at Christmas time. Of course we observed the day as well as possible under the circumstances, and one of the features was a fine dinner. We had some champagne on board, but the weather was quite hot, and, having no ice, we were at a loss to find a way to cool the wine, which could not be endured as it was. During our cruise we had been making many deep-sea soundings, and it dawned upon us that by sinking the bottles down in the sea about a half-mile we could find water cold as ice. This was an inspiration, so we thought, and we immediately sent down a lot on a wire for refrigeration.

“At the proper time it was drawn up and placed on the table, and we found the bottles delightfully chilled. When the steward opened them, however, there was no ‘pop’ to the cork, and the wine looked flat and bad when served. What was our astonishment upon tasting it to find that it was pure salt water! I thought first that it was a bad practical joke, and ordered more wine sent down into the cold sea-water. This was intended for the dessert course; but when it was opened we were disgusted to again find only salt water instead of sparkling champagne, and our pleasure was spoiled.

“You are probably puzzled to find a solution to the matter. Well, it is very simple. In the deep sea, at the depth to which we sank the wine, the pressure is enormous,—so great, in fact, that the salt water was forced into the bottles through the pores in the corks, and, being more dense than the wine, completely absorbed it. That may sound like a fish-story, but it is a cold fact.”—*Wine and Spirit Gazette*.

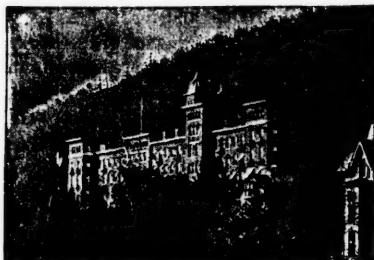
DELICATELY INSINUATED.—Yabsley.—“What possessed you to tell Mrs. Hashcroft that she was giving you too big a piece of short-cake?”

Mudge.—“I meant that it was too big for the number of berries.”—*Indianapolis Journal*.

ODD FIRM NAMES.—I was going down a street in St. Louis when I saw that A. Gander was in the grain business, which is certainly appropriate, and it called to mind a number of like instances that I have seen in different sections of the country. In Chattanooga an undertaker is named Gay; in Mobile the former keeper of a cemetery was named Graves; in South Pittsburg there is a law firm named Bright & Early; in Marion, Indiana, a law firm which formerly existed was Robb & Steele; in Mount Vernon, Illinois, is a sign reading “Fly Coffin Shop;” in Rushville a hotel firm used to be Cook & Fry; a sign in Paxton, Illinois, reads “A Sample Lawyer;” in Troy, New York, a butcher is named Calf-killer; near Lynn, Massachusetts, two farmers got into a lawsuit, which was entitled Haymaker *vs.* Turnipseed; a man named Apple is in the fruit business at Indianapolis; Sickman is the name of a doctor in Cincinnati; Hoss & Harness is a livery-stable firm in Kokomo, Indiana; a man named Boatman runs a ferry in Mississippi.—*St. Louis Globe-Democrat*.

The Jackson Sanatorium,

DANVILLE, LIVINGSTON COUNTY, NEW YORK.



ESTABLISHED 1858.

A DELIGHTFUL home for those seeking health, rest, or recreation. Under the personal care of experienced physicians.

Elegant modern *fire-proof* main building and twelve cottages, complete in all appliances for health and comfort. Extensive apartments for treatment arranged for individual privacy. Skilled attendants. All forms of baths; Electricity, Massage, Swedish Movements, etc. Delsarte System of Physical Culture. Frequent Lectures, and Lessons on Health Topics.

Special provision for rest and quiet, also for recreation, amusement, and regular out-door life.

Culinary Department under supervision of Mrs. Emma P. Ewing, Superintendent of the Chautauque Cooking School.

Hillside location in Woodland Park, overlooking extended views of the famous Genesee Valley region, unsurpassed for health and beauty. Charming walks and drives. Lakes, glens, and waterfalls in immediate vicinity. Clear, dry atmosphere, free from fogs and malaria. Pure spring water from rocky heights. Perfect drainage and sewerage.

Steam heat, open fires, electric bells, safety elevator, telegraph, telephone, etc.

For illustrated pamphlet, testimonials, and other information, address

Mention this Magazine. **J. ARTHUR JACKSON, Secretary, Danville, New York.**

HOUSEHOLD TREASURE.

Growing Popularity of the Oxford Sewing-Machines.—There is nothing more truly a household treasure than a good sewing-machine. To be without it is to be wilfully deprived of the immense advantage of one of the greatest of all inventions. A machine once bought is a perpetual treasure. It demands no wages, occasions no expense or trouble, and is always ready without a moment's notice to render the work of the laborious housewife tenfold more efficient and expeditious. Some machines combine the best ideas and suggestions which have been so abundantly introduced in this remarkable mechanism.

A machine which exhibits in liberal combination all the best features introduced is the Oxford Sewing-Machine, made by the Oxford Manufacturing Company, Chicago, with lock-stitch, shuttle running light and quiet. These machines have the following important features: cheapness, perfect self-adjusting and graduated tension, are under control of the operator, and are always positive in their working. They are entirely self-threading in all points, including the shuttle. The needle is self-setting, the attachments are quickly and easily placed and fastened. The shuttle has an easy oscillating motion, causing it to keep its proper place against the race. Their Oxford, Home, and Columbia machines, with attachments, were awarded the medal premium at the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago.

HOW ZOLA WRITES.—Zola is a slow writer, and seems to have difficulty in the mere mechanical operation of penmanship. Four pages, not a line more or less, day after day without interruption for years and years, line upon line, this has been the secret of a literary production which has not its equal among living writers.

Immense preparation had been necessary for the "Faute de l'Abbé Mouret." Mountains of note-books were heaped up on his table, and for months Zola was plunged in the study of religious works. All the mystical part of the book, and notably the passages having reference to the cultus of Mary, were taken from the works of the Spanish Jesuits.

The "Imitation of Jesus Christ" was largely drawn upon, many passages being copied almost word for word into the novel,—much as in "Clarissa Harlowe" that other great realist, Richardson, copied whole passages from the Psalms. The description of life in a grand seminary was given him by a priest who had been dismissed from ecclesiastical service. The little church of Sainte-Marie des Batignolles was regularly visited.—"*Emile Zola—A Study*," by R. H. SHERARD.

FOUND IT SO.—She.—"Was their elopement a success?"

He.—"The elopement was; but it was followed by a failure."

She.—"What was that?"

He.—"Their marriage."—*Truth*.

THE CANADIAN SLEDGE-DOGS.—Mr. Cameron, in his talk with a *Courier* reporter, told of the dogs that are used for sledging during the winter in the northwest territories of Canada.

Six or eight dogs are used on each sledge. They are fed only once in twenty-four hours, and that is in the morning before the start is made and after the dogs are in harness. At that time about four pounds of frozen fish are given to them. Everything must be in readiness for the start, and the men must look to it that they are at hand to jump on the sledges, for at the very instant that the last morsel of fish disappears the dogs are off at a breakneck speed. Strange as it may seem, the drivers do not dare to feed the dogs unless they are in harness. Otherwise they would scatter, and nothing more would be seen of them. They are driven with one long rein attached to the leader. A whip with a very short handle and a very long lash is used to urge them on, though in most cases they need no urging, for they seem to feel that the faster they go the quicker they will come to the post, where food and warmth and a lazy life await them. They travel often as far as ninety miles a day.—*Buffalo Courier*.

REAL WISDOM.—"It's a wise man who keepeth his own counsel."

"Yes; but a wiser one who can sell it, like a lawyer."—*Truth*.

PRECAUTION.—"And so you gave my new overcoat to a stranger," said an angry man to his wife, "simply upon his saying that I had sent for it?"

"I didn't know he was a swindler," replied the unfortunate woman between her sobs, "and, besides that, I took every precaution."

"What precautions, pray?" inquired the husband.

"Why, I made him give me a receipt for it, and here it is," returned the wife, extending a piece of paper. "I always thought such acknowledgments were binding." But, alas for the overcoat, it was never seen again.

PROVIDENT LIFE AND TRUST CO.
of Philadelphia.

Safe Investments. Low Rate of Mortality. Low Expense Rate.

Unsurpassed in everything which makes Life Insurance reliable and moderate in cost.

Has never in its entire history contested a death loss.

CONSUMPTION CURED.—An old physician, retired from practice, had placed in his hands by an East India missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy for the speedy and permanent cure of Consumption, Bronchitis, Catarrh, Asthma, and all Throat and Lung Affections, also a positive and radical cure for Nervous Debility and all Nervous Complaints. Having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, and desiring to relieve human suffering, I will send, free of charge, to all who wish it, this recipe in German, French, or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail, by addressing, with stamp, naming this magazine, W. A. NOYES, 820 Powers' Block, Rochester, N. Y.

A POUND OF FACTS is worth oceans of theories. More infants are successfully raised on the Eagle Brand Condensed Milk than upon any other food. They are liable to less sickness than others. The Eagle Brand is therefore the best infant food.

Carl L. Jensen's

CRYSTAL PEPsin TABLETS are nature's only cure for dyspepsia and indigestion. They prevent dulness after eating, and induce a refreshed feeling of renewed energy. Delivered by mail to any post-office in the United States on receipt of fifty cents in stamps. Samples mailed free. Address the **CARL L. JENSEN COMPANY**, 400 N. Third Street, Philadelphia, Pa. For sale at all druggists'.

ICELANDIC SIMPLICITY.—A young Iceland friend, going across the desert from Reykjavik to Akuyera, met a man riding on a pony. Such meetings are rare in those parts, and, like ships on the sea, the two hailed and spoke, and this was the manner and substance of their conversation :

"What's your name?"

"Stefan."

"Whose son?"

"Thornsteinsson."

"Where are you going?"

"To prison."

"What for?"

"Stealing a sheep."

"No one taking you?"

"No. The sheriff was busy, so he gave me my papers"—the warrant for his arrest—"and sent me on by myself."

The men exchanged snuff and a kiss and parted. A week later the younger Icclander was returning by Reykjavik, and near the same spot he met the same man.

"What!" he cried—"Stefan Thornsteinsson! Why, you said you were going to prison."

"So I was, and I went, but they would not let me in."

"Why not?"

"Because I had lost my papers, and the sheriff said he could not take me without a warrant."

"So they won't have you in prison?"

"No."

"And you are going home again?"

"Yes."—*London Million.*

SUPERSTITION.—"It's bad luck," said the bad boy, "to give a person something sharp or pointed. I shouldn't be a bit surprised if young Mr. Jinkles and I were to part friendship after I leave this pin in his chair for him."—*Chicago Tribune.*

EGYPTIAN POSES.—The first thing that a Western observer remarks in the pose of Egyptian drawings of the human figure is that it is an impossible combination according to our ideas. We see the face in profile, the eye full-length, the chest in front view, and the legs sidewise. But before we condemn this as contrary to nature it is well, as Professor W. M. Flinders Petrie suggests, to see what the attitude of a modern Egyptian is and how far our notions are correct.

To avoid all ideas of posing for the subject, he selects the figure of a boy from a large group that was photographed without any special aim by a Cairo dealer. In the kneeling figure are seen the profile of the face, the eye full, the chest in front view, and the legs sidewise. Everything that we have heard condemned as unnatural and impossible in the ancient sculpture is seen in the modern native, without any constraint, when simply taking an easy position.—*Popular Science Monthly.*

THE most indestructible wood is the jarrah wood of Western Australia, which defies all known forms of decay, and is untouched by all destructive insects, so that ships built of it do not need to be coppered.

THE
WONDER-WITCH.

BY

M. G. McCLELLAND,

AUTHOR OF "OBLIVION," "A SELF-MADE MAN," "TEN MINUTES TO TWELVE,"
"WHITE HERON," ETC.

PHILADELPHIA:
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY.

TO MY MOTHER.

Copyright, 1894, by J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY.

PRINTED BY J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY, PHILADELPHIA, U.S.A.